

Max J. Friedländer
Early Netherlandish
Painting
The van Eycks
Petrus Christus

'This new edition, translated from the German, brought up-to-date in some respects and augmented by about two-thousand new illustrations, will not so much revive (which would not be necessary) as make more readily accessible, more useful and, if only by way of comparison with the original, more pleasurable one of the few uncontested masterpieces produced by our discipline. These fourteen volumes—their publication begun at Berlin in 1924 and, after the appearance of Vol. x1 in 1933, continued at Leyden from 1935 to 1937—summarize and conclusively formulate what M. J. Friedländer knew and thought about a field which he, with only Ludwig Scheibler and Georges Hulin de Loo to share his pioneering efforts, had been the first to survey and to cultivate. And what M. J. Friedländer then knew and thought will never cease to be worth learning.' (From the Preface by E. Panofsky)

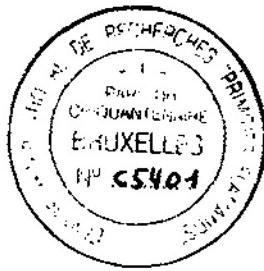
The van Eycks—Petrus Christus

Max J. Friedländer

Early Netherlandish Painting

VOLUME I

Max J. Friedländer



The van Eycks—Petrus Christus

PREFACE BY

ERWIN PANOFSKY

COMMENTS AND NOTES BY

NICOLE VERONEE-VERHAEGEN

TRANSLATION BY

HEINZ NORDEN

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Preface

This preface is a slightly altered translation of an *Epistola Gratulatoria* which can be found in *Max J. Friedländer, Ter ere van Zijn Negentigste Verjaardag*, The Hague, 1957, pp. 11-18.

To honor the centenary of M. J. Friedländer—who, had God added unto his days nine more years, would have celebrated his one-hundredth birthday on June 5, 1967—by a new edition of *Die Altniederländische Malerei* is more than an act of piety. This new edition, translated from the German, brought up-to-date in some respects and augmented by about two-thousand new illustrations, will not so much revive (which would not be necessary) as make more readily accessible, more useful and, if only by way of comparison with the original, more pleasurable one of the few uncontested masterpieces produced by our discipline. These fourteen volumes—their publication begun at Berlin in 1924 and, after the appearance of vol. xi in 1933, continued at Leyden from 1935 to 1937—summarize and conclusively formulate what M. J. Friedländer knew and thought about a field which he, with only Ludwig Scheibler and Georges Hulin de Loo to share his pioneering efforts, had been the first to survey and to cultivate. And what M. J. Friedländer then knew and thought will never cease to be worth learning.

Had he—a child of that prodigious decade which, in addition to himself, Scheibler and Hulin de Loo, produced such men as Aby Warburg, Karl Giehlow, Julius von Schlosser, Heinrich Wölfflin, Gustav Pauli, Campbell Dodgson, Bernard Berenson, Wilhelm Vöge, and Adolph Goldschmidt—been compelled to say whether he preferred to be called an ‘art historian’ or a ‘connoisseur,’ he would probably have decided in favor of the second alternative. He never held a position in academic life; to the best of my knowledge he never even gave a public lecture. His relationship with those who had the privilege of working under him at the Berlin Museums (which he would never have left had not the advent of the Third Reich forced him to do so) resembled that between a great painter or architect and his assistants rather than that between teacher and student. And in his mouth such words as ‘scholarship’ (*Wissenschaft*) and ‘research’ (*Forschung*) were always tinged with a faint trace of irony. Yet no one has ever demonstrated more clearly that art history and connoisseurship are not mutually exclusive.

In theory, the connoisseur may be likened to the diagnostician, who almost intuitively, and often in a fraction of a second, identifies the disease of a patient; whereas the historian and the scientific expert may be compared to the pathologist or biochemist who attempts to understand the nature and, if possible, the causes of this disease by methodical experimentation. An innate sensitivity, akin to the ‘ear’ of those whom we call musical (but developed and disciplined by experience), enables the connoisseur to be affected by works of art in such a way that he can judge and evaluate them with regard to condition, period and place of origin, authorship, and quality—whereby, to quote M. J. Friedländer himself, ‘the correct attributions tend to emerge spontaneously and at first glance.’ And when he has formulated the sum total of his impressions in a verdict such as ‘a good but badly overpainted picture from the early period of Piero di Cosimo’ his mission is, strictly speaking, ac-

accomplished. He can make this verdict more explicit, and thereby more convincing, by detailed comparisons; but as long as he limits himself to the role of connoisseur pure and simple he can neither prove nor interpret his judgment. The proof of it (for example, by adducing technical or documentary evidence, ferreting out ancient copies, etc.), and the interpretation of it (for example, by assigning to the work a definite place within a stylistic or iconographical chain of evolution, or by explaining it as an expression of religious beliefs or political convictions), he must leave to either the scientific expert or the art historian who do precisely what he, the connoisseur, refrains from doing: they subject the work of art to questions other than those which it can answer by and of itself.

In practice, of course, things happen in a very different way. The judgment of the connoisseur, subjective though it may be with regard to its psychological nature and origin, yet claims, like that of the diagnostician, objective validity: it must stand the test of scientific and historical analysis and interpretation. Conversely, the very object of the art historian's analysis and interpretation, much as he may strive for objectivity, comes into being in a process of subjective re-creation and may change its character even while this process is going on. As the diagnosis 'cancer,' if correct, potentially contains whatever may be revealed by subsequent tests, so does the verdict 'a good but badly overpainted picture from the early period of Piero di Cosimo,' if correct, potentially contain whatever may be revealed by subsequent examination and interpretation. The connoisseur could be defined as a laconic art historian, and the art historian as a loquacious connoisseur.

In fact, the connoisseur constantly draws upon and augments the amount of knowledge available to the art historian (and, of course, to the scientific expert); whereas the art historian (and, of course, the scientific expert) is constantly forced to come to grips with questions of date, authenticity and attribution which by rights fall within the province of the connoisseur. M. J. Friedländer himself has made the wise and witty remark that every competent art historian becomes, within his field, a 'connoisseur *malgré lui*' (*ein Kenner wider Willen*), and the non-connoisseur might be tempted to hail the connoisseur as an 'art historian *malgré lui*.' In Friedländer's case, however, such a return compliment would be inadequate even if the words 'art historian' were qualified by any number of laudatory epithets.

That the author of *Die Altniederländische Malerei* was not an 'art historian *malgré lui*' but an art historian by the grace of God goes without saying. Whoever is or will be able to 'correct' him in a question of detail will owe the very possibility of doing so to what M. J. Friedländer himself has accomplished in nearly seventy years of patient labor. But what distinguishes his writings from those of other art historians is his unparalleled ability both to rationalize and to keep intact the immediate, vital experience which called them into being—an ability closely linked to his equally unparalleled combination of universality and consistency.

In addition to *Die Altniederländische Malerei* and an untold number of editions, catalogues, essays, and reviews, we owe to M. J. Friedländer a whole library of monographs (on Altdorfer and Dürer, on Cranach and Lucas van Leyden, on Memling and Bruegel and Max Liebermann), such comprehensive surveys as *Der Holzschnitt*, *Die Niederländische Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts*, *Von Eyck bis Bruegel*, *Essays über die Landschaftsmalerei und Andere Bildgattungen* and, in addition, the enter-

taining yet profoundly philosophical booklet, *Der Kunstkennner*. Such a man can certainly not be called a specialist. Yet the stupendous range of his interests was limited and shaped by the principle of 'selectivity.' If the modern art historian, like the *littérateur* of the eighteenth century, were greeted in Elysium by a reception committee composed of those who had good reason to be appreciative of his terrestrial activities, M. J. Friedländer's reception committee would have been exceptionally large in numbers but exceptionally homogeneous in composition. It would have consisted exclusively of painters and practitioners of the graphic arts; of Northerners rather than Italians; of fifteenth-, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century masters rather than moderns (excepting only Max Liebermann who was a friend of M. J. Friedländer). It would have included, along with the great, a goodly number of less important characters provided that they had revealed themselves to the new arrival's eye as remarkable and sympathetic personalities: the strong-willed 'Master of the *Virgo inter Virgines*'; the many modest laborers in the vineyard of Rogier van der Weyden who owe to Friedländer their posthumous reintegration and a modicum of immortality; the enchanting 'Antwerp Mannerists' to whom no art historian had ever paid attention before. And it would have been free from 'geniuses without talent.'

In short, M. J. Friedländer was attracted only by artists with whom he could establish a kind of personal rapport; and this passion for the concrete and the direct also determined the nature of the more general subjects in which he could take an active interest. He could write about phenomena but not about 'problems'; about the portrait, the still life and the landscape but not about *Raumgestaltung* (or, as one may read in recent German writing, *Raumschau*); about the connoisseur but not about 'methods of art criticism.' He was distrustful of a 'history which halts the flux of what is happening' (*die den Fluss des Geschehens staut*), and he was unalterably opposed to 'the ideal of an ascetic scientism (*das Ideal einer asketischen Wissenschaftlichkeit*) which demands the sacrifice of enjoyment.' He was profoundly sceptical of such generalizations as disregard of what is 'specific and essential' (*das Spezifische und Wesentliche*); and he harboured a passionate and justified hatred of 'that involved (*verzwickte*) terminology which makes the perusal of art-historical books a torture.'

All this, however, does not mean that he himself was not a historian, that he considered it superfluous to search for unity within the bewildering mass of individual experiences or that he was uninterested in the question whether and how it is possible to convey visual impressions by words. All his antipathies were nothing but the expression of an extraordinarily refined sense of quality: a feeling for the genuine as opposed to the spurious, for clarity as opposed to obscurity, for order as opposed to confusion. He was convinced that whoever writes about art has to live up to demands analogous to those that confront the artist himself.

Max J. Friedländer was second to none in his command of the methods and the apparatus of scholarship. He felt, however, that this apparatus had its place in a *catalogue raisonné* or in an article in the *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* rather than in a coherent text that can be enjoyed by any literate reader. And his aversion to historical and philosophical construction bears witness to the cautiousness of a man who, just because he knew so much, knew only too well how little

anyone can know. 'After all, we were not there when it happened' ('*Wir sind ja nicht dabeigewesen*'), he once remarked when a group of younger colleagues discussed the question whether a certain picture was 'possible' only before or after 1463; and it was a matter of course with him incessantly to question his own views and, if necessary, to revise or retract them with the greatest candour.

In point of fact, he would occasionally abandon a position even where it was unnecessary (in other words, if his original judgment had been quite right), as when he, who in a masterly page had defined the basic difference between the Master of Flémalle and Rogier van der Weyden, allowed himself to be swayed by the clamorous zeal of those who insisted that these two painters were the same person. This generous tolerance was a matter not only of intellectual conviction but also, I think, of character; for M. J. Friedländer was, appearances notwithstanding, a man both modest and kind. The iron self-control and elegant aloofness of the Prussian *Geheimrat* and the quick-witted irony of the native Berliner were only an armour indispensable for the protection of a warm and vulnerable heart. Unbeknownst to the beneficiaries of his intervention (unless they learned of it by accident and many years after the fact), he would, unasked, exert his enormous influence to further the careers, in certain cases even to save the lives, of younger scholars whom he thought worthy of his help, regardless of whether he agreed or disagreed with them in matters of 'method.' To quote from one of his own letters, he 'looked across but not down.' His latest photograph, taken when he was nearly ninety, should reveal this inherent goodness even to those who failed to recognize it before¹.

While M. J. Friedländer declined to generalize in such a manner that the 'specific and essential' dissolves itself into abstract concepts, he was without equal in that other kind of generalization which operates by way of condensation rather than abstraction—which distils from a wealth of individual data a characterization both comprehensive and concrete. When he condenses the essence of a style, particularly that of an artistic personality, into a few sentences, more often than not into a few words ('eher heissblütig und in Entzückung als geduldig und mit besonnener Kunstfertigkeit,' he once wrote of the working habits of Jan van Eyck), such formulations may be paraphrased; but as this writer has experienced more than once, it is impossible to match, let alone to improve upon them.

M. J. Friedländer, one of whose essays deals with the *Fremdwort* (words borrowed from foreign languages such as *Penchant* as opposed to *Neigung*, *Passion* as opposed to *Liebe*) was extraordinarily sensitive to language as such. Since the very thing we write about, that is to say the work of art, constitutes itself (as mentioned before) in a process of subjective 're-creation,' even the least presumptuous of us can communicate with his readers only by translating the results of this 're-creative' process into a verbal description. He must, for better or worse, attempt to be a writer as well as a scholar. This problem—for it is a problem—is not always realized by art historians; and those who do realize it are not always capable of solving it. M. J. Friedländer, however, not only knew that he had to be a writer; he also knew what kind of writer he wanted to be; and, most importantly, he had the gift of converting his intentions into action. He always avoided what he considered to be the Scylla and Charybdis of art-historical discourse, the *trockene Weise* ('the dry mode') and the

1. This photograph, a reproduction of which serves as frontispiece for this volume and for the publication referred to in the first note, forms a moving contrast with an earlier one, taken more than thirty years before, which is reproduced *ibidem*, following p. 28.

dunkle Weise ('the obscure mode') ; and he believed that 'aphoristic remarks arrayed in unsystematic fashion and presented with the utmost economy of words' (*äusserste Wortsparsamkeit*) are 'relatively best adapted to transmit pictorial impressions.'

The consistency with which he applied these principles endowed everything he wrote with an inimitable 'style'—a style which, *mutatis mutandis*, fits in with Liebermann's famous definition of drawing : 'Zeichnen ist Auslassen'. With M. J. Friedländer, to write means to omit. The precept of '*äusserste Wortsparsamkeit*' rules supreme. Observations of fundamental importance, particularly in the domain of iconography, where he never felt quite comfortable but was always guided by an amazingly sure intuition, are hinted at rather than spelled out. And what is said between the lines is no less essential than that which is explicitly stated. If—to mention only three of Friedländer's great contemporaries—Wölfflin's style may be called 'classic,' Vöge's 'expressionistic' and Warburg's sublimely 'Mannerist,' M. J. Friedländer's may be said to represent a triumph of 'Impressionism.'

I should like to conclude with a little personal experience which has left an indelible and, I believe, most salutary imprint on my mind. When, almost forty years ago, I was looking at some drawings in the Kupferstichkabinett at Berlin, M. J. Friedländer, on his way to his directorial office, stopped for a moment at my table and greeted me with an amicably ironic : 'Well, what are you "researching"?' ('*Nun, was forschen Sie?*') But when he observed among my private books a copy of Max Dvořák's selected essays which had been posthumously published under the somewhat pretentious title *Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte* (*History of Art as History of the Mind*), he added : '*Wir haben natürlich Körpergeschichte getrieben*' ('We, of course, have been engaged in the history of bodies'). This *jeu d'esprit* exposed and rebuked, in a brilliant flash of wit, the claims of a certain intellectual superciliousness ; yet—and again 'between the lines'—it expressed a creed : the creed of a man for whom the work of human hands, like that of nature, has '*weder Kern noch Schale*', and in whose hands art history was history as well as art.

Princeton 1966

ERWIN PANOFSKY

Note to the Reader

Thirty years have passed since Max J. Friedländer, in the fourteenth and final volume of his *Die Altniederländische Malerei*, undertook the task of bringing up to date his monumental study, begun more than a dozen years before. Editing this work today, one is tempted to bring it up to date once again. The question is to choose among the various courses that are open. What dare one do? How far should one go?

Needless to say, the integrity of the original text must be scrupulously preserved. Yet there are some editorial measures that may be properly taken, and that have been taken here. For one thing, the supplementary essays and remarks which Friedländer was under the necessity of lumping together in his final volume have now been inserted in the volumes to which they pertain. Surely this entails no question of principle.

Further, some new notes have been added, giving information on changes of location, restorations, dimensions, and the like. The propriety and utility of these additions will scarcely be questioned. What may be in question is how complete these notes should be.

Friedländer clearly never intended to give an exhaustive documentation for each painting. He meant only to present his own findings and views. To give the fullest information here would have altered the character of his work. It would be, moreover, a work of supererogation, enormously lengthening the present edition and distracting, often tiresomely and for details of small import, the reader's attention from the author's lucid thought and language. Besides, a complete catalogue of the Flemish primitives is now in the course of publication¹.

If it is unwarranted and impracticable to give the complete documentation, selective annotation seemed all the more essential. But here a different problem arises, for Friedländer, in his own supplements in Volume XIV, corrected only here and there, accepted only occasionally, with caution and subtle reservations, expressed in a very personal way, some of the theses that had been published by others in the meantime. It would be inexcusable, besides being quite impossible, to attempt to usurp the author's place as a judge of his own text.

The present editors believe that the only possible approach is one that respects Friedländer's words and thoughts, while yet giving the reader such new data as seem indispensable. This meant eliminating from the added notes all remarks not essential to adjusting the original statement to the present factual situation.

For example, Friedländer discusses one painting by Petrus Christus, giving its location as the Schloss collection in Paris. This painting is now in the Louvre, and there can be little doubt that Friedländer would have corrected his text accordingly. But it is not at all certain that he would have altered his opinion of the painting in the light of subsequent critical opinion, nor that he would have even mentioned, let alone discussed these views.

Again, this particular work by Petrus Christus was overpainted, a point which Friedländer discusses. Now, if this overpainting has been removed since his time,

¹. *Les Primitifs Flamands*, I.
Corpus de la Peinture des Anciens Pays-Bas Méridionaux au Quinzième Siècle, published since 1951 by the Centre National de Recherches 'Primitifs Flamands,' Brussels.

the change should certainly be noted. Yet we have no way of knowing how Friedländer would have regarded any new conclusions voiced by later critical opinion about the painting as a result of this change.

A few notes are included that correct manifest errors, such as misprints that may modify the meaning of the text, or dimensions that are grossly inaccurate. When possible, dimensions not given by Friedländer have been added. Since the present edition includes many more illustrations, new plate numbers have become necessary. And finally, in the original edition Friedländer refers a number of times to photographs of works he did not reproduce. These references are retained in the present edition, to provide the reader with the author's source, even when, as in most cases, the work is now reproduced.

As already mentioned, the supplementary essays included in Volume XIV of the original edition have here been added to the text in the volumes to which they are applicable. They are followed by a brief Editor's Note, summarizing pertinent studies that have been published since 1937. The newly added editorial notes are also grouped at the end of the pertinent sections and are included with those from Friedländer's Volume XIV; numbers referring to them appear between square brackets in the text, at the appropriate points of reference.

In the Catalogues at the end of all volumes except the first (Friedländer included them only beginning with the second volume), interpolations concerning dimensions and locations are inserted directly at the appropriate places, a small circle (o) indicating those by Friedländer himself, a small black dot (•) those by the editors.

The additional paintings enumerated in Volume XIV of the original edition are now placed at the end of the proper Catalogues. These are, in turn, followed by the editors' *Addenda*, comprising outstanding or otherwise important paintings, found since 1937, that have been the subject of published studies. For easy identification of the source of these entries, the same system of circles and dots is employed.

Friedländer's own footnotes, from the original text, are now placed in the margins and their numbers appear in the text in the conventional manner.

The illustrations to the present edition make a most valuable contribution. Not only are recent photographs used, but a far greater number of paintings are reproduced. In fact, each work with a number in the Catalogues is illustrated, and in some instances copies as well, the only exceptions being where neither the painting nor a photograph could be located. Whenever the original frame of a painting is preserved, it is included in the reproduction. A large proportion of the photographs used, especially of paintings from the 15th century, are drawn from the documentation of the Centre National de Recherches 'Primitifs Flamands,' Brussels.

A general index will appear in Volume XIV of the present edition, covering names of artists, owners, locations and iconographic subjects. The original index of locations in each volume has been maintained and brought up to date. Volume I, which lacked such an index in the original edition, has now been provided with one.

In a work of this magnitude, it is almost inevitable, despite the great care that has been exercised, that an occasional error of fact is likely to have crept in. The publishers will be indebted to readers for calling such possible lapses to their attention.

Foreword

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Forewords are really afterwards, since the author formulates expository remarks in justification or exculpation of his work only when he has completed it and knows—or believes he knows—its character, virtues and faults. This foreword is for once a foreword indeed, for I have completed only a modest portion of what I make bold to announce. In respect of the whole, I am only able to report on plan, purpose and good intention.

For something like 35 years, my endeavours have turned without a break upon one subject, Netherlandish painting. Towards it my vision has been directed, on journeys, in visits to public galleries and private, at loan exhibitions and auction rooms. In the museum service I enjoyed the good fortune of working under Wilhelm von Bode. The vicissitudes of the art trade have washed up much on my shores. Now friends have pressed me to publish my accumulated observations. They complain—and I am ashamed to admit, rightly so—that my wonted habit of scattering isolated ‘attributions,’ opinions and conjectures in various notices, book reviews and articles, often with inadequate documentation, adds up to a picture of confusion. They have expressed—and kindled within me—the hope that an orderly and connected presentation may serve a useful and fruitful purpose. I cannot quite avoid the suspicion that this haphazard and disjointed way of publishing in bits and pieces is rooted as much in the nature of the subject as in the character of my own knowledge; yet I am now resolved to embark upon the effort to put it into a more integrated form. In all likelihood I should not have agreed to the project, in despite of the faith of my friends, but for the publication of a work in English, which demonstrated to me that something of the kind is feasible, with pluck. Until Sir Martin Conway’s book, *The Van Eycks and Their Followers* (London, 1921), no one had seriously tackled the task of writing about early Netherlandish painting in connected sequence, of garnering the wealth of findings, the harvest of stylistic analysis that have come our way since the work of Cavalcaselle. Crowe and Cavalcaselle published their history of early Netherlandish painters in 1857 in English. (A French edition, with documentary supplements by Alex. Pinchart and Ch. Ruelens that retain their value even today, was published in 1862, a German edition in 1875.) These dates lie far in the past. Indeed, stylistic analysis in earnest, especially in Germany, began only since then. The first and most difficult step was taken by Ludwig Scheibler, who died several years ago, having suffered with particular harshness the fate common to all art connoisseurs. The innumerable valid conclusions he was the first to reach swiftly became common and anonymous property, while his name remained identified with his occasional errors. In 1894 I had the privilege of his personal tutelage—even though his ‘method’ consisted in nothing more than modest integrity. Indeed, I am convinced there is no other ‘method.’ Beside Scheibler’s name I would place, with no less reverence, that of W. H. James Weale, who shares with German experts only his austere sense of dedication. Weale is a mentor of matchless authority, until it comes to stylistic analysis. In writing the present vol-

ume, I had ample opportunity to admire his meticulous care. The documents he so zealously and tirelessly unearthed form a sturdy foundation for our entire edifice of stylistic analysis and conjecture.

Among the living, useful contributions have been chiefly made by Georges Hu-lin, of whom more can be expected.

18

It is my intention to voice my own observations in respect of the monuments as straightforwardly as possible. Although I have learned from others whenever and wherever I could, I should like to avoid all effort at compilation, for the sake of unity, be it but the unity of a fallible and limited individual approach. Insofar as documents are concerned, all I can do is to copy them, with my critical guard up. Naturally I shall seek to follow historical sequence. And if, directly or indirectly, my notions should enlarge history, all the better. I shall not, however, go searching for connecting threads, for I am utterly convinced that to do so is almost tantamount to improvising them. Of every thousand bricks that once made up the structure, no more than a hundred have come down to us. A vain undertaking, methinks, to seek to recreate it from the random pieces that have been preserved. To forge these chance fragments back into an unbroken concatenation means to falsify one's own observations in the service of the historian's obsession. I shall also eschew, as a matter of principle, ferreting out the 'laws of art.' The pretended ability to recognize such laws serves only to cloud one's vision and prejudice one's observation, as does all ambition for causality and pragmatism. Similarly, I shall not pledge objectivity. All effort to limit subjective judgment tends to stunt judgment as such, which is always essentially subjective. It eliminates the only organ granted us for the perception of works of art. I am convinced that complete objectivity is forever unattainable, and I should like to avoid the harm that inexorably follows its pursuit.

The form of publication I have chosen, individual volumes that are relatively complete in themselves, is more than a mere expedient. It does not embody any mandate from the publisher. It expresses my view that all we see is the sequence and juxtaposition of creative minds, whose relationships to one another are highly conjectural.

These remarks may sound negative, and ever so slightly reminiscent of sour grapes. I must leave it to the reader to find the positive complement. Then again, perhaps I shall have my say when the work is quite done, in an afterword that will serve as a foreword to the whole.

Berlin, Autumn 1923

MAX J. FRIEDLÄNDER

The voluminous literature on the Brothers van Eyck has been conscientiously utilized and clearly listed in the great book by W. H. James Weale, *Hubert and John van Eyck, Their Life and Work*, John Lane, London and New York, 1908. I mean this book whenever I cite 'Weale'. An abridged edition (in which the bibliography has been extended, however) appeared in 1912—*The van Eycks*, by W. H. James Weale, with the co-operation of Maurice W. Brockwell, John Lane, London and New York.

Introduction

One must begin somewhere. And yet, the point at which one begins assumes inordinate importance, for it tends to be regarded as the point from which everything flows, like the spring of a great river—and this it cannot be. The history of Netherlandish panel painting begins with the brothers van Eyck. Our own conviction that this is actually a myth shall not keep us, however, from choosing our starting-point exactly as did every narrator from Guicciardini and van Mander onwards. Historical tradition is always fraught with error, stemming from recurrent sources—such as a propensity for simplification and for linking up the meagre dates that happen to be known. Yet the after-effects of actual events are never wanting, even though they determine the depth, the power and the duration of what we call history rather than its content.

About the middle of the 16th century, Lodovico Guicciardini¹ recorded the cultural achievements of the country in the north, from the vantage point of a detached and superior outsider. His notes on the painters are little more than a list of names. Around these bare bones, 50 years later, when tradition had already become adulterated, Carel van Mander² undertook to write his history. Here as there—and indeed in every old reference—the first name is van Eyck. Early historians naïvely thought themselves well-served in raising the curtain on a personage whom they could celebrate as an innovator. Jan van Eyck, so relate both Guicciardini and Vasari, invented oil painting about the year 1410.

Beyond doubt the growth of Netherlandish painting, which for dearth of surviving specimens we have difficulty in tracing farther back, was quickened and enhanced by a creative act early in the 15th century. We feel as though we were stepping from darkness into light. Nor is the darkness merely the night of our ignorance. The van Eycks left their footprints and their names, keeping their personalities from oblivion and thus succeeding where their predecessors failed. The mediaeval life of art often seems impersonal. In part this is a mere illusion, attributable to limited knowledge and shallow observation, but in part it flows from the way artists then worked. Yet there is a fundamental difference between the mass of nameless limners and that group of painters who stand out, even from one another, and at whose head march the brothers van Eyck.

Panel painting in the narrower sense—the kind of painting the creative work of the van Eycks did so much to foster—means to frame a piece of the visible. Pleasure in reality was growing, pushing aside the older missions of the painter—decoration, instruction, narration, edification. The mediaeval altarpiece was a liturgical object, a piece of ecclesiastical furniture, worked into the fabric of the edifice, bound to its task of exemplifying the divine, arousing and enhancing reverence. The naturalism of the new pictures is closely related to the growth of individual expression. Tradition had begun to loosen its hold, eyes were trained on the world's infinite diversity—and rigid contemporary patterns lost their power. Each painter created his own

1. *Descrittione di Tutti i Paesi Bassi...* Anversa, 1567 (Italian edition), p. 97.

2. *Het Leven der Doorluchtige Nederlandtsche en Hoogduytsche Schilders*. First edition published in 1604 in Alkmaar, second 1616-1618 in Amsterdam. A German translation, with the Dutch text from the second edition, was published by Hanns Floerke, Munich-Leipzig, in 1906, and this is the book from which I quote.

forms, in keeping with his own nature. Conversely, the sturdier, the more self-assertive the man, the deeper his mind dipped into reality.

If the new spirit seemed to erupt all at once, it was because the forces behind it had already gathered underground. A crucial convergence, a fruitful constellation, the intermingling rush of two currents suddenly matched will with skill. The individual genius that was a heritage of Lower Germany, that had already shown its vigour and spontaneity often enough, encountered the wordly and courtly patronage of the French-Burgundian princes.

Of course there were painters in the towns of the Low Countries before the van Eycks—no need for dragging out documents. Their work, alas, has perished and we have little hope of ever establishing whether and in what degree and sense they were precursors of the brothers van Eyck.

The memorable loan exhibition at Bruges in 1902 included a single panel, probably painted in that town, which might possibly testify to the state of art in Bruges before the powerful influence of the van Eycks was felt. It is a wide panel from St. Sauveur, a *Crucifixion with St. Barbara and St. Catherine*, to the left and right (but not on hinged wings). There is not a spark of the future grandeur in this rather tired painting³. In all its essential characteristics, it is much like the numerous paintings preserved along the lower Rhine and in Westphalia. Whatever their date of origin, they provide a complete picture of the technique, composition, approach and formal idiom of traditional 14th-century altar painting in Lower Germany. The fact that this single Flemish painting, which happens to have been preserved, bears no characteristic local imprint says nothing on the question of whether other and better ones may not have been lost. Even so, this isolated and inadequate piece fits in well with the view that the van Eycks had no links with the earlier Flemish altar painters, but drew on other sources in shaping their works.

Such data on their life as we have confirm that they were not born in Flanders nor learned their art in any of her towns. Maaseyck, the place of their birth, or at least the town that apparently gave them their name and thus figures as their cradle, lies on the River Maas, north of Maastricht, as far from Antwerp as from Cologne. We know virtually nothing about the art of this region.

The documents say a good deal about Jan and very little about Hubert. They tell us that Jan was active in the service of two sovereigns. In those days, sovereigns, no matter what part of the Low Countries they happened to rule and to what dynasty they belonged, were all related in bonds of kinship and distinguished by a mode of life that gave a special character to their taste in matters of art, and that differed sharply from the settled bourgeois life. At the time, the centre and exemplar of aristocratic culture in the north was the French-Burgundian court.

While there is a scarcity of Netherlandish altarpieces from the 14th century, works created by court painters of Netherlandish descent in France and Burgundy are not altogether absent. The Louvre has an altarpiece with the crucified Christ and the martyrdom of St. Denis, which comes from the Chartreuse at Dijon. It is a painting of considerable size and skill, attributed to either Jean Malouel or Henri Bellechose. The Louvre also has a *Lamentation* with the arms of Burgundy on the back, believed to be the work of Jean Malouel. In the museum at Dijon, finally, we find Melchior Broederlam's altar wings with four scenes from the Life of

3. Bruges Exhibition, 1902,
No. 2, Photo by Bruckmann.

4. The most authoritative critical treatment of Burgundian painting is to be found in L. Dimier's *Les Primitifs Français*, published in Paris, by the Librairie Renouard, undated, in the series *Les Grands Artistes*. The illustrations are meagre, compared to the welter of names.

Mary, which has been proved to have been painted by this master about 1395.

These three works—whether or not two of them are properly attributed—are valuable *sui generis* and represent extraordinary achievements. They enable us in some degree to reconstruct Netherlandish panel painting of this early vintage. There is documentary evidence, moreover, that painters from the Low Countries enjoyed special favour at the Court of Burgundy⁴.

Yet we must envisage Netherlandish altar painting as not quite so refined and as rather less Italianate in character than the panels created in Dijon. In all likelihood, the prevailing taste at the Court, which was directed towards Italy, and especially Siena, governed the choice of painters and influenced their style.

Towards the end of the 14th century, Netherlandish names rise in number among the painters recorded as having been in the service of French sovereigns. Charles V patronized the renowned André Beauneveu, who hailed from Valenciennes, that is, Southern Flanders. From 1368 to 1380, Jean de Bruges was *peintre du roy* to this same ruler. Jean Duc de Berry and Philip the Bold of Burgundy, brothers to the French king, both preferred the services of Netherlandish painters.

In 1384, Philip the Bold was made Count of Flanders, establishing a tie of major political import and interlinking the courtly life of France with that of the Flemish bourgeoisie, in respect of matters of art and culture. Craftsmanship in Bruges and Ghent grew more refined, in response to the predilections of the French rulers. The painters whom we discover as having served Philip and his son seem to have been Netherlanders, one and all, to wit : Jean de Beaumetz (1375-1397), from Hainaut ; Jean Malouel (1397-1415), from Gelderland ; Melchior Broederlam (1381-1409), from Ypres ; and Henri Bellechose (1415-1430), from Brabant. Claus Sluter, the great sculptor at this same court, seems also to have been from Lower Germany, judging by his name. The main scene of Philip's patronage of art and architecture was Dijon. From 1384 onwards the Chartreuse de Champmol was there built, holding the tombs of the Burgundian ruler and his son, John the Fearless.

There is a remarkable statement in an existing document, to the effect that Philip had altars made on the model of those he had seen in Flanders. This hints at the superiority of Flemish altarpieces and shows how ready the Burgundian sovereigns were to exploit the creative resources open to them with this increment in territory.

Almost constantly on the move, eagerly relishing their uncertain power, these princes were intent upon lending visible form to their reigns by way of precious and ostentatious objects they could carry about. There was a hint of the goldsmith's craft in all the forms of art they cherished and fostered. The tapestries that went to make up their tents and that briefly invested bare walls with the glamour of royalty were monumental and at once portable. Indeed, tapestry-weaving became the monumental art par excellence in the Low Countries. For the rest, the craving for show, so inseparably tied into the love of art, was pointed in the main towards weapons and finery, precious stones wrought into jewellery, fine metalwork, books and paintings of small dimension. Court taste was transmitted to the aristocracy, to the newly rich burghers of the Flemish towns, to the resident Italian merchants who acknowledged Netherlandish leadership in fine craftsmanship. The crafts that reached their highest flowering in the course of the 15th century were precisely those that met the penchants of the Burgundian court and that began to emerge as early as

1400—gold-working, illumination, tapestry-weaving. The Duc de Berry, who died in 1416, was a passionate bibliophile. A number of codices illuminated for him have been preserved; and we come upon the names of his painters as well. He was tireless in his zeal for fine books, seeking out the most talented masters to illuminate them. Painters from France and Lower Germany served him side by side. French illumination looked back on a glorious tradition and was able to contribute much in this exchange. Yet the impulse for the new spirit seems to have come from the Netherlanders. Among the books illuminated for the Duc de Berry, none is so germinal as *Les Très Riches Heures*. French miniature painting, rigorous in style, had reached its purely national pinnacle in the 13th century. Late in the 14th, it began to be modified by an influx from Italy and invigorated by the keen Germanic eye for nature. *Les Très Riches Heures* was apparently illuminated by Netherlanders. In an inventory of the Duc de Berry's library from the year 1416, the work is attributed to a Pol de Limbourg and his brothers, who seem to have executed it between 1411 and 1416. Maaseyck is not far from Limburg. If names permit inferences as to origins, these book painters who worked in Paris and Dijon were fellow countrymen of the van Eycks in the narrow sense, while in point of time they were certainly immediate forerunners of the brothers from Maaseyck. Pol de Limbourg's social status coincides with that of Jan van Eyck. He is described as the Duc de Berry's *varlet de chambre*, the same title Jan van Eyck carried at the Court of Philip the Good. The representations of the months in *Les Très Riches Heures* manifest an ingenuous feeling for the life of nature, unusual for book illustrations of this period and rather bold and robust in effect. Buildings are delineated with conspicuous objectivity. The book displays a creative approach that contains in germinal form the promise that was to reach full achievement in Netherlandish panel painting. It is close to the early work of the van Eycks, in terms of both time and place. We have every reason to look to miniature painting for the roots of Netherlandish panel painting, which indeed long preserved its links with this subtle thumbnail mode. The art of book illumination, in the 14th century, was aristocratic and at once progressive, in keeping with the common observation that libertarian stirrings find earliest refuge with the mighty of this world rather than with the slothful commonalty, the powerful often being particularly prone to meet ecclesiastical constraint with arrogant self-assertion. Altar painting, essentially an art of the people, took on a progressive cast only in the 15th century, when the wealthy burghers, treading in the footsteps of the gentry, gave the painters their head.

Like the walls of a church or the panes of a window or the panels of an altar, the book page offered to begin with no more than a plane surface that was to be adorned, without thereby ceasing to be flat. But only the book page was free of such utilitarian functions as load-bearing and enclosure, and it was easier for the miniature painter to experiment with techniques of illusionism—a game that soon turned to dead earnest and in which the small dimensions favoured success. Miniature painting, later to become arch-conservative, was in the vanguard of pictorial invention about the year 1400.

Even though the remaining evidence is full of gaps, it seems plausible to look on Netherlandish panel painting as having its roots in the art of illumination that preceded it. This view finds support in the fact that Jan van Eyck himself painted

miniatures. Indeed, some peculiarities of Netherlandish panel painting as a whole begin to make sense when this derivation is acknowledged, and therein perhaps lies the most eloquent testimony.

The Adoration of the Lamb

The temptation to begin with the van Eycks is all the greater in the light of the astounding masterpiece at Ghent that is attested to be their work and that bids fair to provide a wealth of information about them. The Altar of the Mystic Lamb¹ has indeed not yielded to investigation without a good deal of resistance and many of its puzzles still await solution. In size, complexity and almost encyclopaedic variety, it stands head and shoulders above all other 15th-century altarpieces in the Netherlands. If any painting was ever calculated to exert a revolutionary impact it was this one, which has been regarded as a crucial landmark ever since its inception. Its inscription, uncommon in form and wording, hints that even donor and painter were well aware of how much their creation meant.

The altar stands in its original place in a cramped little chapel in the Church of St. Bavo (Plates 1-16). With its wings swung open on feast days, it offers the impression of a whole gallery of pictures, rather than a single painting. The five panels below and the seven above are separated from each other by a sturdy framework. A stark contrast in the scale of the figures enhances the effect of profusion. The less high zone below displays across its whole breadth a landscape cut into five parts by four dividers not unlike the casements of windows. The upper storey, with fewer figures, of substantial size, weighs heavily upon the lower. Steep and narrow spaces rise here at the top, with scarcely room enough to take the groups and figures. The illusion of air and depth created down below brings on a thirst for space that is not quenched above. The earthly zone, all of a piece, and densely populated with figures small in size, provides no firm foundation for the architecture of niches up above, the stage and background for the heavenly zone.

Enthroned up high upon the centre panel, its top projecting in a semicircle, is the Glorious Christ (Plate 2B), seen full-face, right hand raised in blessing, a sceptre held in the left, an impressively hieratic figure altogether aloof from all the other parts of the altarpiece, seated in absolute solemnity, in the heavy panoply of jewel-en-crusted robes, the Papal Tiara on His head, the Secular Crown at His feet.

The question has occasionally been posed whether Christ is represented here, or God the Father. I have no idea how it can be settled from the iconographical findings alone. Mediaeval art not infrequently shows Father and Son in each other's image.

The inscription on the three semi-circles over the Godhead reads as follows :
**THIC EST DEVS POTENTISSIMVS PROPTER DIVINAM MAIESTATEM† SUM-
 MVS OMNIVM OPTIMVS PROPTER DVLCEDINIS BONITATEM—REMVNERA-
 TOR LIBERALISSIMVS PROPTER JMMENSAM LARGITATEM**

Below, on the riser of a step, are two rows of words :
**VITA SINE MORTE IN CAPITE. IVVENTVS SINE SENECTVTE IN FRONTE—
 GAVDIVM SINE MERORE A DEXTRIS. SECVRITAS SINE TIMORE A SINISTRIS.†**

To the left beside the Almighty, on a panel with a semi-circular top slightly lower than the centre panel, is Mary reading a Book of Prayer, half-turned towards the

1. Cf. my book, *Der Genter Altar der Brüder van Eyck*, Kurt Wolff, Munich and Leipzig, 1920.

Godhead, but altogether aloof in spirit (Plate 2A). Her exalted status too is epitomized with a plethora of jewel-stones, in her diadem and along the hem of her robe.

The inscription filling concentric semi-circles above her head reads :

† HEC EST SPECIOSIOR SOLE † SVPER OMNEM STELLARVM—DISPOSICIO-
NEM LVCI—COMPARATA INVENITVR PRIOR CANDOR EST ENIM LV CIS—
ETERNE † SPECVLVM SINE MACVL A DEI...

25

On the opposite side, balancing the Virgin, is John the Baptist, seated, a book in his lap, his right hand upraised in an exhortatory gesture (Plate 3). Draped over his hair robe is a green cloak hemmed with jewels. Perhaps the painter showed the austere Baptist in such extraordinary finery from a naïve and almost pagan impulse to represent the supernal in enhanced, kingly splendour. In any event, the precious stones serve to complete the equilibrium among the three centre panels.

The inscription encircling the Baptist's head like a halo reads :

† HIC EST BAPTISTA JOHANNES: MAIOR HOMINE: PAR ANGELIS LEGIS—
SVMMA EVAGELII SANCTIO APOSTOLORVM VOX SILENCIVM—PROPHETA-
RIUM—LV CERNA MVNDI DOMINI TESTIS.

The floor in the three panels shows identical tiling, in high perspective, the oblique pattern of lines hinting at a single space holding the three figures, even though each panel has the aspect of a separate, shallow niche.

To the immediate right and left of the central triptych, on the hinged wings, come the angels paying musical homage to the divinity—on the left a crowded choir of eight singing angels, on the right an angel in gold-and-black brocade at the organ, before a group of five musicians (Plates 4B, 5A). The figure at the organ is sometimes wrongly identified as St. Cecilia.

The frame of the singing angels bears the following words at the bottom :

MELOS DEO LAVS PERHENNIS GRATIARIUM ACTIO.

And the counterpart below the organist reads :

LAUDANT EVM IN CORDIS ET ORGANO.

The floor of the two angel panels is formed of tiles in an alternating pattern of the Lamb, the Cross, the initials of Christ and Mary and the mystic word AGLA—partly in Greek letters—which consists of the initial letters of the Hebrew words AT HA GEBIR LEILAM ADONAI.

At the extreme left and right in the top row come Adam and Eve, in that order, treated out of context and in a style that is sharply distinct from the rest (Plates 4A, 5B). Half-turned towards the middle, both figures are depicted with luminously sensual verisimilitude against a background of deep, dark, narrow niches.

The floor of these niches is invisible, for the perspective is altogether different, painted with ostentatious skill, as though seen from below. Indeed, part of Adam's feet, especially, is cut off by the forward rim. The two nude figures are painted with such utter realism that they seem almost incongruous and certainly at odds with the overall style of the composition.

The demi-lunettes above Adam and Eve are filled with small figures simulating statuary—above Adam, Cain and Abel with their sacrificial offerings; above Eve, Cain slaying Abel. These supple, dramatically accentuated compositions hint at a vigour that quite evidently found no outlet elsewhere in the altarpiece. They are often overlooked, because of their smallness and lofty place. They deserve better.

Inscribed on the frames below Adam and Eve are these legends :

ADAM NOS IN MORTEM PRECIPITAVIT

EVA OCCIDENDO OBFVIT

In space and content, the five panels of the bottom row form a single, symmetrical composition with a central, focal point, towards which all the figures turn and strive, as the object of their worship. Mid-summer dwells over the countryside, which breathes a southern air and shows luxurious vegetation beneath a blue sky.

The fixed centrepiece, under the three enthroned main figures above, holds the heart of the altar, from which it receives its name : The Adoration of the Lamb (Plates 6, 7). On an altar table in a meadow that seems to rise gently in the middle distance stands the Lamb, blood gushing into a chalice from a wound in its breast. On the altar facing are the words :

ECCB AGNVS DEI QVI TOLLIT PECCATA MVNDI

To the right and left beside the altar kneel angels, some of them holding the instruments of Christ's passion. In the foreground at the bottom, precisely in line with the centre of the altar, rises a fountain with the inscription :

HIC EST FONS AQVE VITE PROCEDENS DE SEDE DEI ET AGNI

This quotation from the Book of Revelation (xxii, 1) points to the origin of the altar's symbolism. The Lamb does indeed figure repeatedly in Revelation, but the altarpiece at Ghent cannot be said to illustrate these texts in a proper sense. The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine, a book that enjoyed a great vogue in the 14th century, includes a chapter on the Feast of All Saints, in which is described a vision that coincides with our painting in many points. In the famous painters' book from Mount Athos too there are hints for compositions, developed from the Apocalyptic text, which like the Golden Legend bear a close resemblance to the Mystic Lamb at Ghent.

Mankind, thirsting for salvation, is represented here on the paradisiac greensward by its noblest exponents—the Prophets, the Apostles, the Saints and the Martyrs appear in close-knit groups on either side. To the right of the fountain is a group of white-robed bearded men, those in the foreground kneeling. There are 14 of them, the Apostles with Paul and Barnabas. Farther to the right comes a throng of Saints, headed by three Popes and seven Bishops and Abbots. Recognizable by their attributes are St. Stephen, stones in his gathered robe, and St. Livinus, patron saint of Ghent, with his tongue. The crowd on the left contains personages from the Old Covenant and the pagan world who presaged the Salvation to come or had an inkling of it. Among those on their knees several are noteworthy for their rich and bizarre attire. They may represent Virgil and other pagans especially favoured by the Christian Church. The Prophets bear books in their hands. In the background, processions of Saints emerge from the shrubbery, men on the left, women on the right. Nearly all of them are identified as Martyrs by the palm fronds in their hands. Among the women, several can be further identified—Dorothy, Catherine, Barbara, Agnes. Rays that emanate from the dove hovering at top centre strike some of those in the congregation as a special mark of distinction.

Hills rise gently to either side from a valley in the distance, their contours enlivened by groups of trees and mighty church edifices. The tower near the river has been identified as the west tower of Utrecht Cathedral 111.

On the left wings a group of horsemen approach, on the right hermits and pilgrims afoot (Plates 8-10). These side areas are walled off to the rear by rocky scarps, leaving open only a single, narrow defile as access to the paradisiac pasture so temptingly spread out in the middle. The riders in the inner panel are identified on the frame as *Christi milites*, Warriors of Christ, those in the second as *iusti iudices*, the Upright Judges 121. At the head of the cavalcade ride the three youthful, saintly heroes, Victor, George and Sebastian—Victor carrying a standard of red silk with a white cross, George one with a red cross on white, and Sebastian a red one quartered in gold, with smaller crosses of gold in the four quarters. The inscription on Sebastian's shield :

DOMINVS FORTIS ADONAY SABAOT VE
EMANVEL· I· H· S† XPC AGLA.

In the wake of the Saints come Princes proved as good Christians by deeds of valour. Presumably they represent historical personages, but not all can be unequivocally identified. Here we must look for those whom we are accustomed to encounter as 'Christian heroes.' They include Charlemagne, most likely the bearded figure with the tall crown, and Godfrey de Bouillon, astride a white mule. The black-bearded man close by the Emperor Charlemagne is identified, no doubt correctly, as King Arthur of England.

All the figures in this panel, like the horsemen in the one adjoining it on the left, have been given names at one time or another, based on some fancied resemblance. The beardless noble with the lowered eyelids, a portrait if there ever was one, has been called Charles VI of France, and also St. Louis. The partly hidden man, half-turning towards the presumed King of France, is said to be John the Fearless of Burgundy, the snub-nosed horseman in profile the Duc de Berry², and again Sigismund of Luxembourg.

It is entirely plausible that the painter here commemorated princes of his time and country, or eminent personages of the recent past. It would seem reasonable too that he should have done honour to his patrons by ranking them among the *iusti iudices*. That notably individual heads ride cheek by jowl with frozen stereotypes serves only to support the view that some of the figures were painted from life or vivid recollection, while others are based on traditional iconography. In any event, such portraits as there may be have not been conclusively identified³.

According to a tradition that can be traced back to the middle of the 16th century, the brothers, Hubert and Jan, are portrayed as two of the Judges⁴. The foremost rider in the panel, elderly, a smile on his clean-shaven face, mounted on a white horse, is reputedly Hubert—although de Heere's text does not unequivocally pinpoint this figure as one of the painters. The black-robed, likewise clean-shaven horseman in the fourth file, ostentatiously wheeling towards the observer, is accounted to be his brother Jan. It does have the aspect of a portrait—indeed, it looks every inch a self-portrait. But this tradition has been called into question of late. Reinach thought the supposed Hubert was the Duc de Berry, and subsequently Jan Six and Paul Post declared him to be Philip the Bold of Burgundy. Post also identified the traditional Jan as Philip the Good.

Post's argument is detailed and persuasive. He sees the four gentlemen riding side by side as the Counts of Flanders. Behind Philip the Bold comes the bearded Louis

2. Durrieu, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1910, Vol. 1, p. 461 ff.; Six, *Revue Archéologique*, Vol. 2, p. 401 ff.

3. S. Reinach, *Revue Archéologique*, 1910, Vol. 2, p. 359 ff.; P. Post, *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 1921, Vol. 42, p. 67 ff.; Durrieu, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1920, Vol. 1, p. 77 ff.

4. Ode, by Lucas de Heere, 1559, Chapter 23.

de Male, his father-in-law and predecessor, then John the Fearless, his son and successor, and in fourth place Philip the Good, who ruled Flanders at the time the altarpiece was created.

This would seem to dispose of Reinach's and Six's conjectures concerning the second horseman. Reinach, citing a medal by Pisanello, identified him as John VI, Emperor of Byzantium, while Six saw in him Manuel II. Reinach, on rather flimsy grounds, declared the traditional Jan to be Henry V of England. Six, clinging to tradition in respect of Jan van Eyck, suggested that the fifth rider—the one with the rod in his hand—was Hubert, in literal interpretation of a verse in Lucas de Heere's Ode : *sijn broeder Hubert rijdt by hem in de hoogste stee*.

It is tempting to conclude that the painter portrayed the Counts of Flanders among the Upright Judges—Philip the Good from life, and his sovereign's ancestors and predecessors after existing portraits. Unfortunately, the resemblances, fancied or real, do not prove the case.

The inner panel of the opposite wing bears the inscription *Heremite Sancti 131* on the frame below. On it sombre elders with long beards are seen striding towards the heart of salvation. At their head march St. Anthony, wearing the blue cross of his order, and St. Paul. The eight weather-beaten hermits who follow resist identification, but the two women emerging from the foliage and turning around the rocky outcrop are Mary Magdalene, recognizable by her box of ointment, and Mary of Egypt.

The panel at the extreme right, subscribed *Peregrini Sancti 131*, is dominated by the towering figure of St. Christopher, who leads a group of pilgrims of all ages, robed in habits of brown and grey and other shades.

The luxurious vegetation of these panels is given a tropical aspect with palm trees, cypresses, pines and lemon shrubs. Hermits and pilgrims come from strange and faraway lands, like the birds that enliven the air in keenly observed flight.

When the wings of the altarpiece are folded inwards, the resulting polyptych appears much taller, on account of its narrow panels (Plate 11). There is a higher degree of unity, because all the figures are of roughly the same size, but the unity is compromised, for beside the two Johns, shown in grisaille as statues of stone, kneel the two figures of the donors, painted in vivid hues, while the Annunciation above is done with an intermediate and more muted palette.

The monochrome simulation of sculpture was traditional in 15th-century Netherlandish painting for the outside of altar wings. Indeed, real sculpture originally predominated in the altar. When it began to be replaced by painting, especially on the hinged wings, that was much given to simulating what it replaced. True, no monuments survive, by which this development could be traced, but it may be plausibly reconstructed. At first there was actual statuary in the middle shrine, while the wings, to avoid being encumbered in their movement by too heavy a burden, carried pseudosculpture created by the painter's skill. This simulacrum lingered on, even after the sculptors had relinquished the fixed centre panels to the painters. With a fine sense of parsimony, the stonelike grisaille images were long retained for the outside, to enhance, by contrast, the ultimate and supreme illusion due to realistic colour, when the shutters were folded back. The Ghent altar falters

in its adherence to this tradition ; and here, as in other points, it displays an element of crisis and uncertainty.

The Baptist and the Evangelist occupy the centre spaces in the bottom row, between the donor, Jodocus Vijd, and his spouse, Elisabeth Borluut (Plates 12, 13, 16). The Cathedral at Ghent, now consecrated to St. Bavo, was St. John's at the time the altar was endowed. Each of the four figures stands or kneels in a deep niche, fully projected in space. Yet the total perspective for the two storeys is by no means carried to complete unity. In the Virgin's chamber above, the floor is seen as though from above. The illusion of the figures being poised up on high, which so drastically enhances the physical verisimilitude of Adam and Eve when the wings are open, is absent when they are closed. Yet the upper storey, carrying the Annunciation across the whole breadth of the four panels, is utterly convincing in its unity of space—quite evidently the painter was proud of this feat—and the incidence of light is observed with great care (Plates 14, 15). The angel kneels at a goodly distance from Mary, who kneels at her prayer-stand on the right. The awesome solemnity of the occasion is thus accented. The intervening space that extends over the two centre panels is given the aspect of a still life. It is empty and at once enlivened by the lovingly observed furnishings, the view out the window into the street and the play of sunlight. The angel's greeting, *Ave gracia plena Dominus tecum* and the response, *ecce ancilla Domini*, are not inscribed on scrolls, as was the custom, but hover unframed in the air—the response with naïve cunning turned upside down, as a call that comes from above. The room seems in proper perspective, although a more careful scrutiny suggests some flaws. It is constructed with intuition rather than calculation.

The lunettes above the broader outside panels each hold the half-figure of a prophet, on the left over the angel, Zechariah, *Sacharias*, on the right over Mary, Micah, *Micheas*. Zechariah points emphatically to a passage in a great tome that lies before him. The inscribed scroll unfolded behind his head carries the words : *Exulta satis filia Syon iubila / Ecce rex tuus venit 9°* (Zechariah, ix, 9). The scroll above Micah, whose gaze is directed downwards, says : *Ex te egredietur qui sit dominator in Israel 5°* (Micah, v, 1).

In the demi-lunettes above Mary's chamber we behold two sibyls in full figure, artfully fitted into these narrow spaces—on the left, the Erythraean Sibyl, *S... Eritrea*, an oldish woman in alien garb with the scroll : *Nil mortale sonans afflata est numine celso* (Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi, 49, slightly modified) ; on the right the Cumæan Sibyl, *S... Cumana*, youthful, in rich attire, with the legend *Rex adveniet per scila futurus scilicet in carne*.

From the time of its completion in 1432-1441 until the year 1566, the altar stood in its chapel. On 19th August 1566, immediately before the assault of the iconoclasts, it was taken to the Ghent town hall for safekeeping. In 1584 it was returned to the Cathedral, and in 1587 reinstated in its old place. The panels with Adam and Eve, on the backs of which part of Mary's chamber is depicted, were severed from the altarpiece in 1781 as obscene and sold in 1861 to the Brussels museum. In 1794, the French abducted the four centre panels to Paris, where they were on view for some time in the Musée Napoléon with the collection pilfered from many parts of the

world. The wings, in safekeeping at the Ghent town hall, were never surrendered. After the Battle of Waterloo, the centre-piece, together with many other Belgian works of art, came back from Paris, and in 1816 it was re-erected. At almost the same time, however, the wings—minus the panels with Adam and Eve—were sold for 3,000 guilders to the art dealer L. J. Nieuwenhuys, who resold them for 100,000 francs to the English collector Edward Solly. They were acquired by the king of Prussia with the Solly collection in 1821 and thus reached the Berlin museum. There they were split, in order to show the paintings on both sides at one time. The Treaty of Versailles required Prussia to cede this possession to Belgium. For some years now the whole altarpiece, including the wings from the Brussels museum, has been re-united in the chapel at Ghent.

According to a report by Mark van Vaernewyck⁵, the altar once had a predella, painted in tempera, with a representation of hell. This piece is said to have perished before 1550 through a hapless restoration. The rather odd intelligence finds no corroboration elsewhere.

We do have knowledge of several restorations. As related by Vaernewyck, two of the most renowned painters of the time, Lancelot Blondeel of Bruges and Jan van Scorel of Utrecht, were summoned to repair the altar in 1550. We next hear of a restoration at the hands of Anton van den Heuvel in the year 1663. The centre-piece came to harm in the course of a fire in 1822, and restorations in 1825, 1828 and 1859 were in all likelihood meant chiefly to undo the ravages of this mishap. The wings are known to be perfectly sound, from which it may be concluded that Blondeel, Scorel and van den Heuvel were under no other necessity but to clean the panels, nor did anything more. The state of the centre panels cannot be judged with certainty, since the light in the chapel at Ghent precludes close scrutiny.

Philip II of Spain had a copy of the altarpiece made in 1557-1559, having failed in an effort to acquire the original. Early in the 19th century, this copy got to Belgium from Spain and was there divided up. The Adoration of the Lamb and God the Father were acquired for the Berlin Museum in 1823, Mary and John the Baptist by King Max Joseph of Bavaria—they are in Munich's Pinakothek—while the shutters went into the Cathedral at Ghent in place of the sold originals.

The outside of the lower frame bears the famous inscription that forms the most important document on the history of the van Eycks. It merits the most searching interpretation, since all notions and arguments concerning the creation of the work must proceed from it.

In its present state of preservation, which leaves something to be desired (5), it reads :

P(IC)TOR (H)UBERTUS (E)YCK MAIOR QUO NEMO REPERTUS
 INCEPIT. PONDUSQ(UE) JOHANNES ARTE SECONDUS
 ...IVDOCI VVD PRECE FRETUS
VERS VSE XTA MA I YOS COLLO CATA CTA T VER I.

The interpolations shown here in parentheses cause no difficulty. What is in doubt is the missing opening of the third line. De Bast, in 1823, discovered a copy made by Christopen van Heurne, who died in 1629. There the two words at the critical point read FRATER PERFECTUS. Waagen, on the other hand, reads SUSCEPIT LE-

5. *Den Spiegelm der Nederland-scher Auctheyt*, 1568.

TUS, the second word providing a rhyme to FRETUS—since there are internal rhymes to the first two lines. LETUS might conceivably make sense and would satisfy the rhyme scheme. FRATER PERFECTUS makes no sense, while FRATER PERFEKIT, which has also been proposed⁶, gives no rhyme. An attempt has been made to salvage FRATER PERFECTUS by a slight modification, FRATER PERFECTUS (EST), the derivation being from the passive verb *perfehi*, which means something like ‘to carry to fruition’⁷.

The last line is a chronogram. The letters in red (underlined in the present text) yield the date 1432; but the line must also have some other meaning. The more specific date of 6th May has been read into it, but for the rest interpretation has been abandoned. It was only Alfred Hirsch who launched into an extremely subtle study of this line. He read it as ‘With this verse on Friday MAJ. He lets you come together to view what has been achieved.’ The opening words are seen as linking up with the preceding PERFECIT. The word MAJ, according to Hirsch, who cites Grotewold’s *Taschenbuch der Zeitrechnung*, means the 16th day of the month, while SEXTA means SEXTA FERIA, i.e. Friday (the 16th May 1432 fell indeed on a Friday).

In English the inscription would thus mean approximately :

‘The painter Hubert van Eyck—none was greater than he—began the challenging work, which John, the brother second in skill, completed, confidently (if the reading *laetus* is correct) trusting himself to do so, at the request of Jodocus Vijd, with this verse on Friday, 16th May. He bids you behold the achievement (—1432—).’

Some doubt remains. It would be possible to render ARTE SECONDUS FRATER as ‘the second, i.e. the younger, brother skilfully completed.’

In puzzling over this text, we must bear in mind that it may have been deliberately contrived as a kind of conundrum, satisfying a difficult metrical system in a foreign tongue and thus necessarily obscuring the statement by an oblique choice of words.

It was once taken for granted that the text meant that Jodocus Vijd, the Ghent burgess named as the donor, commissioned the altar from Hubert van Eyck some time before 1426; and that after Hubert’s death on 18th September 1426 Vijd succeeded in enlisting Hubert’s younger brother Jan, who did not live in Ghent, as the only painter capable of completing his brother’s work. This, roughly, was the way things were for a long time supposed to have happened. Yet the inscription itself, with its vexing multiplicity of possible interpretations, may be cited against this simple assumption. Strictly speaking, Vijd is mentioned only in connection with Jan’s work, i.e. the completion of the work. There is no explicit statement that Hubert began it on Vijd’s commission. Of late, there has been much wide-ranging speculation on the score of this original commission. It is suggested, for example, that some well-known contemporary prince may have entrusted the altarpiece to Hubert, and that Vijd managed to get hold of it in its unfinished state, entrusting the completion to Jan. There is no real substance to this theory, for one thing because we know absolutely nothing of any dealings Hubert van Eyck may have had with exalted personages. If either Philip the Bold († 27th April 1404) or William of Holland († 31st May 1417) were the original donor, moreover, why should not one of their heirs or successors have done what the Ghent burgher is said to have done?—to say nothing of the excessive span of time that elapsed between the deaths of these rulers and the completion of the work. There is little probative value to some of the

6. K. Voll, supplement to the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 20th October 1899.

7. Hirsch, *Repertorium für Kunsthistorische Wissenschaft*, Vol. 42, p. 77 ff.

arguments that have been put forward. The depiction of the tower of Utrecht Cathedral is said to point to William of Holland, under whose sway Utrecht lay. Much has also been made of portrait attributions. Even if Philip the Bold *were* represented on the white horse in the extreme foreground (see the discussion of the Upright Judges, above), this does not necessarily justify conclusions on the date of the commission or the identity of the donor. Either Hubert or Jan van Eyck might well have included a portrait of Philip the Bold long after his death. This would not prove that the ruler had anything to do with them or with the altar. He was, after all, the first Count of Flanders of Burgundian blood, and the grandfather of the other Philip, their own ruler. The same considerations would apply to the Duc de Berry, should his portrait as Durrieu suggests be authenticated⁸.

An odd element, admittedly, is the place assigned in the altarpiece to Jodocus Vijd. He and his spouse pray in the forecourt of the temple, so to speak. Their veneration is not directed towards the focus of the universal worship. A more plausible position for the donors would seem to be the inside of the altar wings. One might conjecture that their portraits were not part of the original plan, that Jan van Eyck found room for them on the outside, no other location being available, and, further, that Jodocus Vijd had no influence over the planning of the work. However that may be, no tenable thesis with respect to an original donor other than Jodocus Vijd has been advanced.

8. *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, February 1920, Vol. 1, p. 77 ff.

Hubert or Jan?—The Biographical Data

33

Eager to know the creator of the Ghent altarpiece and ready to honour him as the founder of Netherlandish panel painting, we come upon the names of two masters in the inscription and are left in the air. To distinguish Hubert's share from that of Jan is a tempting and agonizing task. In Weale's book, painstaking to a fault, we find the opinions of the art experts cited and note with astonishment that virtually everyone of the panels has been apportioned, first to one of the brothers, and then to the other.

If Hubert began the work and Jan completed it, we are constrained to seek the dividing line where the one master left off and the other carried on. Careful scrutiny should then yield a picture of two personalities who were active side by side. Examination has indeed been directed towards that end, but the results have been equivocal. More than once, a resigned recourse has been taken to the view that Hubert's share should be looked for *beneath* Jan's, rather than cheek by jowl with it. Hubert, it is suggested, was responsible for the overall design, perhaps even drew all the panels and painted at least some of them, while his brother Jan went over everything. This would mean that what we see is not the creation of two brothers, in the sense that one did this part, the other that, but rather that the whole altarpiece is a common endeavour, to be regarded as the exclusive work of neither Hubert nor Jan.

Distinguishing the two hands in the Ghent altarpiece is a matter of concern, because it would solve the problem of which of the two brothers, Hubert or Jan, possessed the power and inspiration that shaped the destiny of Netherlandish art. True, this is precisely the question the inscription seems to answer beyond cavil. It sets Hubert the peerless above his brother. And indeed, when two brothers are joined in superlative achievement, experience inclines us to look upon one as the leader and the other as the follower and imitator. Genius is rare enough; and that two of a kind should be vouchsafed within a single family seems almost beyond the limits of credibility. If we are to believe the inscription, Hubert, embarking on the great work all alone, can scarcely be unseated from his rôle as the man of destiny. In such terms, more or less, would the problem pose itself, if we knew nothing of the brothers and their work beyond the Ghent altarpiece and its inscription.

Tradition, as it has come down to us in documents, weighs in Jan's favour, against the explicit words of the inscription. The oldest voices praise him, and him alone. They put him in the van of early Netherlandish painters, and by crediting him with the invention of oil painting underline their conviction that he raised the art of painting in the North to a higher level. The earliest references never mention Hubert. The first are from Italy. About 1450, Cyriacus of Ancona (1391-1457)¹ mentions as the most renowned Netherlandish painters *Joannem praeclarum Brugiensem, picture decus*, ahead even of *Rogerius in Bursella* (Rogier van der Weyden), who was then still alive. About 1454, Bartolomeo Fazio² writes: *Johannes Gallicus nostri saeculi pictorum princeps iudicatus est*; and then describes several of the paintings he had

1. Colucci, *Antichità Picene*, XV, 143.

2. *Liber de Viris Illustribus*, printed in Florence in 1745.

seen in Italy. This Italian judgment, describing Jan van Eyck without qualification as the most eminent painter of his age only a few years after his death, is of great significance as a token of how far his influence was felt even then.

Around 1464, in his *Treatise on Architecture*³, Filarete mentions only two names as among the greatest painters in oil, Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden. Hubert is not included. Giovanni Santi enumerates the same two names in his rhymed chronicle⁴. Between 1504 and 1511, Jean Lemaire wrote a poem entitled *La Couronne Margaritique*⁵, in which he singles out a number of Netherlandish painters for praise, including Hugo van der Goes and Dieric Bouts. Here too there is no mention of Hubert van Eyck, while Jan is celebrated as *le roy des peintres du quel les faits parfaits et mignonnetz ne tomberont jamais en oublie vain*.

In his famous diary (1521), Dürer speaks of *des Johannes und der andern Ding* after his visit in Bruges, while at Ghent he regarded *des Johannes Tafel* as *eine überköstliche, hochverständige Malerei und insbesondere die Eva, Maria und Gottvater sind sehr gut*. Weale⁶ chooses to believe that the reference is to the representation of St. John's Vision rather than to the work of Jan. I cannot agree.

Don Felipe de Guevara, who accompanied Charles v to Tunis in 1535, wrote a book entitled *Comentarios de la Pintura*, published by Ponz in 1788, in which he mentions Johannes, Rugier and Patinier as the luminaries of the North⁷. Vasari, in the first edition of the *Vite*⁸, uses a great many words in attributing the invention of oil painting to Jan van Eyck, mentioning Hubert only in the second edition, published in 1568.

As late as 1562, Mark van Vaernewyck⁹ lauds only Jan van Eyck in connection with the Ghent altarpiece, naming his place of birth as *Maeseyc een stedecken in ruudt Kempen lant*. Among the masters of Bruges, he mentions only Hugo van der Goes, Rogier van der Weyden, the 'German Hans' (Memling) and, *boven allen*, Johannes van Eyck.

But about this time, the tide begins to turn. The name of Hubert suddenly emerges and henceforth regularly appears beside that of Jan. There can be no question that this change is associated with the cleaning of the altarpiece by Scorel and Blondeel. When the inscription was read during this process, it was learned with astonishment that two masters had worked on the piece—besides Jan, whose fame had never altogether died away, Hubert, the memory of whose utterly forgotten name now began to reawaken. In 1559, the painter Lucas de Heere wrote an Ode¹⁰ that verbosely sings the praises of the Ghent altarpiece and that contains the first printed mention of Hubert van Eyck. A copy of it was affixed to the wall of the chapel. In the introductory lines, Jan is named as the creator of the altarpiece, evidently by force of the older tradition, but then two painters are mentioned. Hubert, who had begun the work, is described as lying buried in the chapel, and by his side his sister, said also to have painted pictures of importance. De Heere is the first author to speak of portraits of the two painters among the group of the Upright Judges. Ensuing accounts, found in the later works of Vaernewyck¹¹, in Guicciardini¹², in the second edition of Vasari and, finally, in Carel van Mander (1604), repeat the story, in part with much embellishment; and from this time forward, the van Eyck legend, planted by Lucas de Heere, proliferated vigorously.

Guicciardini is the first to speak of Jan at length, giving the date of 1410 for the

3. MS in the Magliabechiana, p. 182.

4. MS in the Vatican.

5. Printed at Lyons in 1549.

6. Loc. cit., 75.

7. C. Justi, in his essay on Margaret of Austria, in *Bonner Vorträge*, Bonn, 1912, p. 28.

8. Published in 1550. The references occur in Chapter 21 and in the biography of Antonello.

9. *Nieu Tractaat Eude Curte Bescryvinghe van dat Edel Graefscap van Vlenderen*, Ghent, Verses 102 and 121.

10. *Den Hof en Boomgard der Poësien*, 1565, pp. 35-38. A copy of this very rare book is in the Ghent University Library.

11. *Den Spieghel der Nederlandscher Auditheyt*, Ghent, 1568, and *Van die Beroerlicke Tijden in die Nederlanden*, 1566-1568 (manuscript in the Ghent University Library, published by M. F. v. d. Haeghen in 1872).

12. *Descrittione*, 1567.

invention of oil painting. His single sentence about Hubert, containing the knowledge so lately discovered, comes at the end, almost with a sense of embarrassment : *A pari a pari di Giovanni andava Huberto suo fratello qui viveva et depingeva continuamente sopra le medesime opere, insieme con esso fratello.* Vasari, who owed his new-found knowledge to a letter of Lambert Lombard and to communications from Domenic Lampsonius and Guicciardini, now also mentions Hubert and ascribes the invention of oil painting to him rather than his brother. Vaernewyck, in *Den Spieghel der Nederlandscher Auditheyt*, is the earliest source for some additional details — he describes Hubert as the elder brother, a statement presumably based on no evidence other than the fact that he began the work and died before Jan. Jan himself died young, he reports, but was the greater master.

A faint trail has come to light concerning a tradition about Hubert van Eyck that antedates the rediscovery of the inscription. In 1495, a German physician, Joachim Münzer, travelled in the Netherlands and jotted down a few sentences about the altarpiece in Ghent¹³. He mentions no painter by name, but curiously enough reports — perhaps repeating a verger's tale — that the master was interred before the altar, a statement that would apply to Hubert, but not to Jan.

If we stick to the effect on contemporaries and the opinions of people of the time between 1450 and 1550, then Jan rather than Hubert is the founder of Netherlandish panel painting.

All that we learn from documents on the lives of the brothers confirms Jan's extraordinary and superior status. We note that princely patrons of the arts wooed him assiduously, while the meagre entries relating to Hubert speak merely of his residence in Ghent and of his competence, as attested by the townspeople there.

Van Mander's biographical data go back to Lucas de Heere's Ode and reflect the speculation that had flourished since 1550. Hubert is said to have been born in Maaseyck in 1366, Jan a few years later. Hubert was Jan's teacher. The age difference, like the supposed teacher-pupil relationship, is presumably based on nothing more than the putative portraits in the Ghent altarpiece. There is no document nor any reliable statement going back to the time of the brothers that provides certainty of Hubert's seniority. Aside from the inscription on the Ghent altarpiece, we know nothing further of Hubert than that in 1425 he submitted two sketches for a painting to the magistrates of Ghent ; and that in 1426 he had in his possession, possibly to be painted, a statue of St. Anthony, together with other pieces pertaining to an altar endowed by Robert Poortier¹⁴. He died on 18th September 1426. That is all.

More lavishly beyond compare flow the biographical sources pertaining to Jan. Let us pursue the career of this master¹⁵ :

1422-1424 (24th October 1422 to 11th September 1424) : Jan receives regular payments in the service of John of Bavaria, Count of Holland, for work he was required to execute in the Palace of The Hague.

1425, 19th May : He is appointed court painter and *varlet de chambre* by Philip the Good.

1425, 2nd August : He is paid for trouble and expense incurred in connection with a journey from Bruges to Lille by order of his patron.

1425-1441 : Regular payments from Philip's exchequer.

¹³. Voll, Supplement to the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, September 7th, 1899, No. 294.

¹⁴. Town Archives, Ghent. Verbatim extracts in Weale, pp. 28, 29, 32.

¹⁵. Weale, p. 27 ff., archives at The Hague, Lille and Bruges.

1426, 26th August : A special payment for a pilgrimage and a secret journey undertaken by order of the Duke.

1426, 27th October : Payment for distant and secret journeys.

1427, October : Journey on a secret mission. Sojourn in Tournay (18th-20th October).

1428, February : Sojourn in Lille.

1428, 3rd March : Order by Philip for continued payment of Jan's salary.

1428, 19th October, to Christmas 1429 : By order of Philip, Jan van Eyck travels with an embassy to King John I of Portugal. The Burgundian prince was suing for the hand of Isabella, John's daughter, and the painter was commissioned to do a portrait of the Infanta. The full report of this journey is in the Brussels archives and is reprinted in Weale, p. 55 ff.

1430 : Sojourn in Bruges.

1430 (?) - 16th May 1432 : Work on the Ghent altarpiece (the documents do not indicate that Jan was staying at Ghent).

1431 : Jan purchases a house in Bruges.

1432, between 17th July and 16th August : The burgomasters of Bruges visit Jan's workshop, to see certain works of the painter.

1433, before 30th June : Philip of Burgundy visits the master's workshop.

1433 (?) : Jan marries Margaret...

1434, before 30th June : A child is born to the painter. Philip of Burgundy makes him a present of six silver cups for the baptism.

1434 : Jan van Eyck works on eight statues of the Counts of Flanders for the new Stadhuis in Bruges. He was commissioned to gild and paint six of these figures.

1436 : Journey on a secret mission for Philip.

1441 : Jan van Eyck at work on an altarpiece with shutters for Nicolas van Maelbeke, who lived in Ypres.

1441 : The master dies, prior to 9th July, the day on which receipt of the fees for his burial in St. Donatian's was entered.

A comprehensive review of the documents¹⁶, together with a careful study of their texts, yields the picture of a fortunate and well-remunerated master. Having changed his residence from Holland to Flanders, Jan van Eyck preferred to live in Bruges, where he acquired a house and established a family. He left the town only at the behest of his sovereign, who summoned and dispatched him at will. John of Bavaria died on 5th January 1425, and a few months later the painter entered the service of the Burgundian prince, who retained him until his death. His loyal and excellent work was often rewarded.

Evidently the prince set great store by the skill as well as the personality of his *varlet de chambre*. Payments from the official exchequer never ceased, nor was there any break in the relationship between duke and painter, although Jan van Eyck seems to have established a rather independent position for himself. He was not in constant attendance at court and maintained the right to work for other patrons. Indeed, insofar as we know his work, the prince's claims on his talents were not very considerable, apart from the sometimes secret journeys. We know little of the commissions he executed for his patron, except for the curious world map he drew, according to Fazio's report. As soon as possible after the death of his Dutch-Bavarian

16. It should be borne in mind that there are gaps in the documentary entries, the account books for several of the years in question being missing.

cousin, the duke appointed the painter to his own court, taking pride in the fact that the master, whom he honoured and esteemed so highly, was at least formally a member of his entourage.

There is no question whatever that some of the surviving paintings are authentically by Jan's own hand. We have, further, the Ghent altarpiece, on which both Hubert and Jan worked, according to the inscription. Finally, there are a number of unsigned pictures in the Eyckian style, including book illuminations that may be by either Hubert or Jan. The Ghent altarpiece itself, as we have seen from its description, displays many discrepancies that would seem to offer plenty of scope for the kind of critical cautery that would result in an apportionment in keeping with the inscription. Hubert set the design, organized the units, guided the work. Pride of invention falls to him—unless his patron or some clerical counsellor had a hand in it. Beside the Ghent altarpiece, the paintings Jan did alone seem modest in concept and intention. Hubert began the work at a time when Jan was not with him. Indeed, the view that the two brothers collaborated, cherished in the older literature, flies in the face of all established documentation. Their ways parted no later than 1422 and never rejoined.

The Signed Works of Jan van Eyck

38

The authenticated and dated paintings of Jan were all done after the Ghent altarpiece was finished. A study of these works not only gives us insight into the master's creative approach but also provides a measure for judging the Mystic Lamb and all the unsigned works in the Eyckian style.

The dated paintings indubitably by Jan van Eyck's hand which have survived, follow in this sequence :

- 1432 *Portrait of the so-called Tymotheos*, in the National Gallery, London (10th October).
- 1433 *Portrait of a Man with a Turban*, in the National Gallery, London (21st October).
- 1433 *Virgin and Child*, in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia (from the Ince Hall Collection).
- 1434 *Double Portrait of Giovanni Arnolfini and his Wife*, in the National Gallery, London.
- 1436 *Portrait of Jan de Leeuw*, in the Staatsgalerie, Vienna.
- 1436 *Virgin and Child with St. Donatian, St. George and Canon van der Paele*, in the Academy 161, Bruges.
- 1437 *St. Barbara*, unfinished, in the Museum, Antwerp (Ertborn Collection).
- 1439 *Portrait of Margaret, the Painter's Wife*, in the Academy 171, Bruges (17th June).
- 1439 *Virgin and Child by the Fountain*, Museum, Antwerp (Ertborn Collection).

The London portrait of 1432, which the National Gallery acquired in 1857 for £ 189-11s from the Munich painter Carl Ross (No. 290; 34 x 19), carries on the stone sill a name (?) usually read as Tymotheos (Plate 17). Underneath are the words LEAL SOUVENIR, which may be rendered as 'in faithful memory.' A third line reads : *Actū anno Dm̄ 1432 · 10 · die Octobris · a Joh de Eyck*. The supposed name is partly written in Greek letters—TUM·OTHEIO—. The subject, a man past his youth, is half-turned to the left and holds a rolled-up sheet of paper in his right hand. His gown is deep red, with a narrow fur hem, his head-covering is green. The power of this simple and harmonious colour combination is incomparable. It stands out from the dark but by no means dead black background. The brownish flesh tints of face and hands have a mildly luminous quality. The stone in the stark sill is skilfully simulated with all its pores and fissures, and its cold and flinty texture enhances the chiaroscuro and the soft, warm depth of fabric and flesh. The light falls straight into the face ; and eyes, nose, brow and mouth are uniformly modelled in subtle gradations with the utmost clarity, the contour on the lighted side sharply bringing out the bony structure of the head, while shadows gather about the cheeks on the near side. These shadows deepen below the jaw, sharply marking off the throat. The foreshortened ear, strongly accented in light and shade, marks the farthest line of the head on the dark side. In its own foreshortening, the hand that holds the scroll is rounded with the same felicitous skill as the head. Poised in his expression and

fixed gaze, this man, with his generous mouth, his broad and slightly upturned nose, his tired eyes, is convincingly evoked in all his essential individuality. The dominant impression is one of shy and sorrowful goodness of nature. He is modest and at once startled. Karl Voll¹ is the author who most strongly has expressed the admiration so richly merited by the masterly control that informs this work.

The *London portrait of 1433* was acquired by the National Gallery in 1851 from H. Farrer for £315 (No. 222; 26 x 19, excluding the frame) (Plate 18). It was once in the Arundel Collection and later in the possession of Viscount Middleton.

The frame bears the inscriptions : *Als ich can—Joh· de· Eyck· me· fecit· ano
MCCCCXXXIII 21· Octobris.*

The man portrayed, of advanced years, wears an unusually prominent head-covering, wrapped and knotted in the manner of a turban. Made of some cool red material, it lends an air of violent agitation to the painting. The hands are out of sight, and the clothing stands out but dimly from the neutral dark background, the sole other eloquence being the lined countenance. To some degree it echoes the restless spirit of the turban, since the eyes are slightly turned aside from the direction in which the head faces, looking straight at the beholder. The technique with which the face is modelled is rather more vigorous than in the 1432 portrait. The nose is emphasized by a strong shadow, and folds and wrinkles are pointedly recorded. The face with the thin, tight-lipped mouth is sharp-featured, yet the man's individual spirit does not emerge as clearly as in the *Tymotheus*. Above all, it is not as intensely human, in a timeless sense. The pinched and covert expression seems to belong, not to the man himself, but rather to the age he lived in. Perhaps the painter was not entirely in sympathy with his subject. Some flaws in the painting are explained by its state of preservation, which is not altogether perfect, although neither is it downright bad. Voll's conclusion that it is not genuine, made in the course of an analysis which otherwise has much merit², is quite unjustified.

2. *Op. cit.*, p. 91.

The *Madonna at Melbourne*, from the collection of C. J. Weld-Blundell (Ince Hall, near Liverpool), was sold to the National Gallery of Victoria in 1922³ (Plate 19). While in England, it was kept pretty much under cover, and several connoisseurs who wrote about it never actually saw it. It was shown at Burlington House in 1884, at the Burlington Club in 1892 (see photogravure in the catalogue of this exhibition) and at the Guildhall in 1906 181 (22.5 x 15). The Virgin is seated indoors, beneath a canopy of blue-and-gold brocade, on a low chair, which is completely invisible, since it is hidden beneath the broad folds of her cloak. In both hands she holds a large book, through which the infant Jesus, seated in her lap, is leafing.

Prior to its recent sale, the painting was carefully cleaned in London by the restorer, George Frederic Zink, with excellent results. He freed it of its heavy layer of deteriorated varnish, which had hidden all the fine details and colour nuances. On the left, beside the brocade, stands the inscription :

COPLET^V AÑO D.
MCCCCXXXIII
P IOHEM DE EYC
BRVGIS

On the right :

AAC IXH XAN

(Here, as elsewhere A stands for I, C for S, X for C.) These inscriptions have on occasion been called into doubt. It has been thought possible that an inscription painted on the frame, as was the master's wont, was subsequently transferred to the painting itself. According to the restorer, however, it is contemporary with the painting. Of two old copies that have turned up in Sicily—almost conclusive proof, by the way, that the original (which bears a note in Italian on the back) was in Sicily—one (now kept in Rome by the heirs of the Duke of Verdura) carries the identical inscription in the same places.

The living presence of this Madonna stems less from her somewhat diffuse person than from the total impression of figure and locale, blended together by the light in which they are bathed. The generous, triangular spread of the robe, filling the painting below, reveals joy in the play of lines and folds. The Virgin sits half-turned, oblique to the viewer, and she holds the child at a similar angle. This invests the figure with a secular air unusual for the time, but in harmony with the lovingly executed rendering of the chamber. The sun steals in through the narrow window, sharply painting the shadows of the mullions on the embrasure, striking highlights from a glass vessel, wreathing the flowery brocade in radiance, making the metal utensils sparkle and animating the room with the pensive mood of twilight.

The *Double Portrait of Arnolfini and His Wife*, dating from 1434 (No. 186B; 84.5 × 62.4) and also in the National Gallery, London, boasts the most exalted provenance (Plates 20, 21). Don Diego de Guevara, a notable of the time of Emperor Maximilian, who had the panel equipped with shutters as well as his arms, presented it to the Netherlands Stadholder, Margaret, before 1516. In the inventory of her art treasures dated that year the painting is listed as *Ung grant tableau qu'on appelle Hernoul le fin, avec sa femme dedens une chambre... Fait du painctre Johannes*. As Weale astutely perceived, the name is a garbled version of Giovanni Arnolfini, a native of Lucca, who took up residence as a merchant in Bruges in 1420 and died on 11th September 1472. His wife was named Giovanna Cenani. The picture next appears in the inventory of Mary of Hungary, and after her death—still in the 16th century—it passed into the possession of the Spanish Crown. Late in the 18th century it fell into the hands of a French general. After the Battle of Waterloo it was 'found' in a Brussels house by an English general, and in 1842 it was sold to the National Gallery for £730.

The occasion depicted seems to be a betrothal, and the emphasis is on the room in which bride and groom join hands. The commission and intention may have been for nothing more than a double portrait, with the master sweeping on into narrative detail on his own. In any event, the composition is altogether unique. And in the 15th century none was audacious enough even to attempt to imitate it. The 15th century records no full-figure portrait in the Netherlands, let alone two in a single space. This grouping did not come into vogue (and thus become accessible to lesser talents) until two centuries later. With inspired autonomy, Jan van Eyck leaps ahead of his time, driven by his love of light, space and natural arrangement. He refuses to isolate the couple from the context of space and colour in which he

beheld them. What he offers us is a kind of snapshot, fixing a certain event—the betrothal—in a certain place at a certain hour, and at once a solemn, symbolic sacrament for all time. One may suppose there was a wide discrepancy between what was ordered and what was delivered. However this painting may have been intended, what we see is a chamber suffused with the sun at twilight, an ambience in the nature of a still life—furniture, various objects, a convex mirror on the back wall, a brass chandelier. And against this two people: the merchant in gala black, as befits a formal portrait; the bride less individualized, with more than a hint of the madonna type. We see a genre piece, but one lacking the usual homespun meaning, a work of portraiture transmogrified, by the gestures of man and woman, the things in the room and especially the lighting, into a mysterious chant rather than a narrative.

41

Above the mirror is a curiously worded inscription by the artist: *Johannes de eyck fuit hic*. The couple is seen from the rear in the convex glass, the verticals all bent outwards. Between their reflections a door is seen, through which the painter enters with a companion. What the master's words may be saying is that he was there, present as a witness.

People and things are all in their place, symmetrically arranged about the centre axis formed by the hanging chandelier of yellow metal, the dark mirror on the wall and the dog standing between husband and wife. The plentiful verticals—in the casement, the canopy over the bed and, carried further, some of the main drapery lines, such as the long, luminous arm hole in the woman's dress, lined with white fur—all these frame the intimate scene and consolidate it into one of monumental solemnity. The most trifling things are depicted with grave and inward-looking scruple, investing them with the value and meaning of ritual objects.

Arnolfini is not looking at his bride or spouse, but reaching out to her with his hand, against which she shyly and reluctantly lays her own. His other hand is raised in an 'eloquent' gesture although he says nothing, and his gaze is straight ahead, with an indefinable expression. She, with her delicate hands, stands at a seemly distance, her head slightly inclined, looking into empty space with dreamy eyes. The total effect is a unique blend of full-blooded immediacy, Italian stateliness and Gothic grace, sacerdotal reticence and patrician opulence. Only the chanciest expression is given to the relationship between man and woman. In this incomparably lofty painting, the master's instinct for uncovering the hidden is wisely tempered, although he lets us know that the embers still glow.

The *Portrait of Jan de Leeuw*, a goldsmith, in the Vienna Gallery (No. 625; 33 × 28), shows an inscription all round the frame (Plate 22):

JAN DE [picture of a lion] OP SANT ORSELEN DACH—DAT CLAER EERST MET
OGHEN SACH. 1401.—GHECONTERFEIT NY HEEFT MI—JAN VAN BYCK WEL
BLIJCT WANNERT BEGAN · 1436.

The letters here underlined (they are not marked on the frame) have numerical values and yield up a chronogram with the dates 1401 and 1436⁴.

The head is turned in a fashion similar to the beturbaned man in London, but both arms are above the picture's margin, and the right hand, holding a ring, is visible. The painting has suffered greatly, and the qualities we have been conditioned

4. Voll, loc. cit., p. 97. He is suspicious of the painting, however, and casts doubt on the accuracy of the cipher, counting v as two i's.

to look for are not apparent in all its parts. Yet a searching scrutiny of the surface with its imperfections still leaves enough subtlety of draughtsmanship and modelling to dispel any suspicion that the painting may be a copy or a forgery.

42

The *van der Paele altar panel*, dated 1436, is the largest surviving painting by Jan van Eyck, apart from the altarpiece at Ghent (Plates 23-25). It came to the Bruges museum from the church of St. Donatian, after having been carried off to Paris by the French in 1794, only to be fetched back from them (No. 1; 122 x 157). The inscription on the frame below reads: *Hoc opus fecit fieri Magister Georgius de Pala, huius ecclesiae canonicus, per Johannem de Eyck pictorem, et fundavit hic duas capellianas de gremio chori Domini 1434 completum anno 1436.* The remaining inscriptions praise the Madonna in the same words as on the Ghent altarpiece and allude to the legend of St. Donatian.

The panel is in a good state of preservation and shows little evidence of over-painting, none of overcleaning, although the varnish has deteriorated and become dull in spots, detracting from the effect. A copy in the Antwerp Museum, dating back to the 16th century, shows the infant Jesus nude, without the covering prudishly added in the original 191.

The Virgin's throne with its steps, rug and brocade canopy is in dead centre and full frontal view, set up within an apse in the Romanesque style, semicircular in shape, with a gallery rounding it from behind. The windows in the gallery are partly hidden by columns, and there are other complexities of perspective, because of the curved architecture, all of which creates a wealth of background the painter was proud and zealous to master. Even so, the chamber is rather low-ceilinged, the heads of the saints reaching to the capitals of the columns. The profusion of forms, held within bounds by the symmetrical design, is enhanced by the many variations in light intensity. Strong light strikes the figures rather sharply from front left, while from behind the window openings in the gallery split up the back wall into shimmering discs. The complex chamber closes in on the figures but does not crowd them. In the foreground one expanse of fabric impinges upon the next, in rich alternation of colour and texture. St. Donatian is robed in heavy blue-and-gold embroidered brocade, holding his gilt crosier and a wheel with lighted candles. The Virgin's red cloak, hemmed with jewels, overflows the patterned carpet underneath the shelter of the blue canopy. On the right kneels the donor, in white, with grey fur; and finally there is St. George, in dark-hued armour, carrying a silken standard. That part of the floor not covered by the rug shows tiling in a geometric pattern of blue. The sidepieces of the throne and the capitals carry fine sculpture.

By comparison, the figures themselves are rather heavy and massive in effect. Having chosen a relatively large scale, the master gave the figures more weight and firmness than he might have done, had they been smaller, and apparently depended on *ad hoc* life studies—at least, this would explain the startlingly three-dimensional verisimilitude of the infant Jesus. Yet what is gained in monumental realism is surely forfeited in flowing grace and intensity of feeling.

St. George introduces an element of disquiet into the solemn gathering. He is the only one whose feet are visible—the others are rooted to the floor beneath generous drapery folds. The beholder's eyes wander to that single pair of feet, for the saint's

stance is unsteady. He alone, moreover is doing something—in fact two things at once, and this seems to embarrass him. His youthful gawkiness forms a strange contrast to the aged, ponderous canon, whom he seems to commend to the Virgin with an uncertain gesture, the while he doffs his helmet with his right hand. With both of his hands busy, his guidon rests uncertainly against his left shoulder and arm. His head is slightly inclined and his face twisted into an empty smile.

Apart from its brief sojourn in Paris, this altar panel has always been on view in Bruges; and it exerted a considerable influence on the painters of the 15th and 16th centuries. The figure of the Virgin, especially, as a set piece on its own, with the seated posture of the infant Jesus, one leg drawn up, the other extended in parallel, was repeatedly taken over by the younger painters of Bruges.

a. The Northbrook collection in London has a copy of the Virgin in half-length, allegedly with the date 1437 on the frame, now lost⁵. The style suggests a 16th-century origin.

b. The Quedeville collection had a copy of the Virgin with the donor⁶.

c. There is a copy of the Virgin in half-length in the collection of J. Fletcher Moulton, London, which was exhibited at the London New Gallery (No. 82). The style suggests a date around 1510 (31.5×24.5 , thus larger than the original).

d. A diptych, to be found in the Bartels collection, Cassel, shows a copy of the Virgin at half-length on the left panel, a youthful donor on the right. It is dated 1513.

e. The Virgin, in half-length, according to the style painted about 1520 (in the possession of a New York art dealer, 1913).

f. The Virgin, in half-figure, also probably painted about 1520, of excellent quality, by Jan Provost (?). Privately owned, in Madrid (32×22) 1101.

g. The Virgin, in half-length, painted about 1530 by Ambrosius Benson (?), of good quality. In the Aldo Noseda collection, Milan.

h. The Virgin, shown to the knees, with an angel playing music on each side, by Adriaen Isenbrant. Formerly in the James Simson collection (in a German art dealer's possession, 1923).

The infant Jesus, translated to the other side and freely modified, was taken over in a major altarpiece wrongly attributed to Jan Gossaert. It is in the Weld-Blundell collection at Ince Hall and was exhibited at the Guildhall, London, in 1906 (No. 60 in the catalogue of this show, with an illustration).

Next to the figure of the Virgin, the striking, wrinkled face of the donor has drawn the most attention. A lifesize, rather vacuous copy of this head is at Hampton Court, London (No. 453 and 272). It is painted on canvas (42×40) and Weale declares it 'most certainly for an original study from life' (*loc. cit.*, p. 84, with illustration).

Adriaen Isenbrant included the head in a painting of the Mass of Pope Gregory (Prado, Madrid, No. 1864) 1111.

St. Barbara, which came to the Antwerp Museum with the Ertborn Collection (No. 410; 32.2×18.6), offers insight into the master's working methods, by virtue of its unfinished state (Plate 26). Little more than the outline drawing is completed, done with a pointed brush on a chalk ground. Light, colour, texture, chiaroscuro are all still missing, making it possible to appreciate how seriously van Eyck took

5. No. 25 in the catalogue of the collection by Weale; and also pp. 84 and 159 in Weale's large van Eyck book (illustration on p. 158).

6. Weale, p. 84.

the preparatory drawing. Not only did he establish the areas sharply and minutely, down to the last detail; he put in the shading and modelling in brownish-grey pigment. A beginning has been made, in the areas of sky, to fill in blue paint.

The Saint is seated directly head on, and her chair and details of her posture are hidden behind the drapery of a long wide robe that fills the whole painting along its lower margin. Nearly all the long straight folds run closely parallel, falling off to the right in an acute angle to the side of the panel, and investing the otherwise restful and symmetrical composition with a sense of movement. The oval head of the Saint is at the precise centre. A splendid Gothic tower on which construction work is underway rises in the middle distance. This serves the painter as an occasion to introduce a view of everyday life—the builders at work on the tower, the masons dressing stone in the shelter below, men bringing up materials. Yet the genre character, like the landscape element, is wholly subordinate to the tower itself and to the dominant figure of the saint, rooted like a flower in the earth through the broad hem of her robe.

The frame bears the following inscription :

IOHES DE EYCK ME FECIT · 1437

In the 18th century this panel was in the hands of Dutch collectors, including Ploes van Amstel—indeed, it was once in the possession of that same Lucas de Heere, whose Ode to the Ghent altarpiece and advice to his disciple Carel van Mander did as much mischief as good for the incipient study of the van Eycks. Van Mander tells of *een cleen conterfeytelke van een Vrouw-mensch... met een landschapken achter, dat maer ghedoooverwet [underpainted] was*, which he saw in the home of his mentor⁷.

The *Virgin and Child by the Fountain*, in the Erborn Collection of the Antwerp museum (No. 411; 19 × 12,2 cm), bears this signature on the bottom of the original frame (Plate 27) :

AAC IXH XAN

IOHES DE EYCK ME FECIT CPLEVIT ANO 1439

Like the Arnolfini panel, this painting was once in the possession of the Stadholder Margaret. Her inventory of 1516 lists it, although without the master's name (*Une petite Nostre Dame faite de bonne main estant en un jardin ou il y a une fontaine*). The sovereign presented it to her Chancellor of the Exchequer, Jan de Marinx.

The Virgin stands before a brocade runner, held by two hovering angels, that droops down over a luxuriant bed of grass and forms a carpet for her feet on the lawn below. The symmetry is lightly skewed by the fountain of yellow metal on the left, which has no counterbalance on the right. The Madonna is at dead centre, but the strip of brocade is shifted a bit to the right, to make more room on the fountain side.

The painting skill of Jan van Eyck at its fullest maturity may be studied particularly well in this small and perfectly preserved work. The jewel-like pigments, resembling enamel, are for the most part set light on dark in fine lines and dots, lending sparkle to all the forms—the flowers in the grass, the hems of the robe, the gold thread of the brocade, the highlights on the metal. This gilt glitter gives an air of

7. Huygens, *Van Mander*, p. 40; Floerke, *Van Mander*, p. 44.

festive life to the rather statuesque poise of the figure, which is enhanced by the straight folds of the cloak.

The *Madonna by the Fountain* in Berlin (No. 525 B) is no more than a free copy after the Antwerp painting (see p. 92).

The *Portrait of Margaret van Eyck*, the Painter's Wife, was once in the possession of the Guild of Painters at Bruges, presumably the counterpart to a lost portrait of the master himself (Plate 28). Early in the 19th century a certain Pieter van Lede found it in the Fish Market and, in 1808, presented it to the town (Academy, No. 21121, Bruges, 32 x 26).

The inscription on the frame reads :

COIVX MS IOHES ME CPLEVIT ANO 1439

17·IVNIIJ

ETAS MEA TRIGINTA TRIV ANORV : AAC · IXH · XAN

This painting has rightly drawn extraordinary praise⁸. Feminine individuality, especially in young women, expresses itself less plainly and more subtly in the features than in the case of men. Hence female portraiture has always lagged a bit behind male, with child portraiture being even slower to develop. The painters of the 15th century, moreover, were far more skilled and accustomed to observe the male countenance. Challenged to depict the pure grace of Arnolfini's spouse, Jan van Eyck could do no better than adumbrate his Marian type. His own wife, no longer in the first flush of youth, he was able to portray far closer to life than the Italian lady.

As always, the head is so turned that the lighted side, with its animated profile line, stands out from its background, here formed by the dark, horn-shaped head-piece, the white kerchief and, finally, the dark fur collar. The rather shallow eyes are turned ever so slightly to the front and gaze calmly and coolly at the beholder. The nose, large in proportion, turns a bit too sharply to profile. The thin lips are firmly closed. The modelling on the shaded side, with its delicate reflections from the white kerchief, is the greatest wonder in this very wonderful work. The kerchief, with its richly pleated hem, its drape and texture lovingly reproduced, serves as a flawless frame for the face. It seems almost meant as the ultimate symbol of the housewife's homely virtues.

Jan van Eyck created his signed and dated paintings between 1432 and 1440, at the height of his powers. He had not reached an advanced age at this period—we are not certain of the year of his birth. The credibility of the alleged self-portrait in the Ghent altar having been shaken, there is no possibility of inferring that year from his appearance, nor can we any longer set store by van Mander's dating, presumably derived from the so-called self-portraits. Jan van Eyck's wife was 33 years old in 1439 and had given birth to a child in 1434. In all likelihood Jan was then in his forties. This must have been his decade of mature and fruitful production, of which we probably possess no more than a modest portion, but that lively, anything but stereotyped and entirely free of pedantry. A study of these surviving works, each one on its own as well as the whole series, is sufficient to give us a full and lucid picture of his creative individuality. It impresses us, among other things with his flexibility and spontaneity. He was quite willing to adapt his approach and technique

8. Voll (*loc. cit.*, p. 26 ff.) characterizes some of its qualities in striking language and with telling judgment.

from case to case, guided by his subject, the format and the nature of the challenge. Dedicated to his passionate quest for accurate observation, he found startlingly new solutions on many occasions. It is plausible to speculate that at this time, and almost certainly in earlier phases, he must have done work departing in many aspects from what we have seen.

46

The series of authenticated paintings follows immediately after the Ghent altarpiece and gives us a measure for judging that work. We seek to ascend that daunting mountain from more than one side, however, to encircle and envelop that challenging creation, as it were, and to that end we must be intent upon uncovering Eyckian art in the phase that preceded the altarpiece at Ghent.

Eyckian Art in Book Illumination

That Eyckian art grew out of the art of illuminating books has long been surmised ; and that Jan van Eyck himself illustrated handlettered books in the service of princes known to have loved artfully ornamented manuscripts is corroborated in a letter Pietro Summonte wrote to M. A. Michiel in 1524¹, which includes the sentence : *Gran maestro Johannes que prima fe l'arte d'illuminare libri, sive ut hodie loquimur miniare.*

Surely the Italian meant Jan van Eyck rather than, say, Hans Memling ; and since he could have scarcely claimed Jan as the first illuminator, his sentence makes sense only if we read it as 'Jan began with the art of illuminating books.' Yet this statement by the Neapolitan scholar, who did not have over much occasion to keep abreast of things in the Netherlands, would be a slender reed but for the fact that specimens of Eyckian illumination have actually come to light. It was entirely plausible to anticipate this event ; but when what had been expected happened one day, the discovery was met with intellectual sloth and resistance, as though it was totally unexpected. It was in 1902 that Durrieu presented the *Heures de Turin*². On 25th January 1904 the manuscript was lost in the fire at the Turin Library, and only its shadow has been preserved in reproductions. Naturally this disaster greatly impaired the discovery's effect ; but fortunately certain portions that belong with the manuscript that went up in smoke at Turin have been found at the Trivulziana in Milan (13) and with Baron M. de Rothschild in Paris (14). These have been published by G. Hulin de Loo. It behoves us to listen with grateful attention and respect when Hulin, the only art critic who studied the miniatures (including those in Turin before the fire) with painstaking acumen, speaks about them in his publication³.

Only two of what was once three fragments now survive of this Prayer Book, which passed from one noble hand into another around the turn of the 14th and during the early decades of the 15th century. A number of painters worked on the pictorial decorations in sequence. In the more recent portions, a style emerges, which all connoisseurs have recognized as 'Eyckian'—even though it was originally a matter of some controversy whether the illuminators of these pages were predecessors of the brothers, whether it was Hubert, or Jan, or both, or whether it may have been their imitators. Hulin's careful scrutiny succeeded in separating the illustrations into groups, clearly done by different hands. The group claiming the greatest notice, on account of its superior quality, includes two representations of the arms of the House of Bavaria, which ruled Holland early in the 15th century. One picture in this group shows a man on a white charger by the seashore, riding at the head of an entourage and offering prayers to Heaven for his deliverance from shipwreck⁴. The horseman seems to be William IV of Bavaria, who died on 31st May 1417. This would seem to fix the date of this miniature and its group and thus to identify specimens of Eyckian art of the greatest historical value, since they precede the Ghent altarpiece by many years. One authority on fashion history⁵ has thoroughly and successfully defended the dating, which Dvořák had attacked with

1. *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, Vol. 30, 1907, p. 148.

2. Paris, 1902 ; *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1903, Vol. I, p. 5 ff.

3. *Heures de Milan*, van Oest, Brussels, 1911.

4. Durrieu, Plate 37.

5. P. Post, *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, Vol. 40, 1919, p. 175 ff.

feeble arguments⁶. William IV was the elder brother and immediate predecessor of Count John of Holland, in whose service Jan van Eyck demonstrably was from 1422.

Hulin believes he has found more in the Turin manuscript than an early Eyckian style, indeed, two variants of that style, which would mean nothing more nor less than early and coeval specimens by both Hubert and Jan. He identifies a second group of book decorations, which are Eyckian in the general sense, but by a hand different from that of the first group. Thus the traditional notion that the two brothers were partners and shared a workshop has been revived. On the assumption that the two groups were done at the same time, there is really no alternative to attributing the more important and archaic group to Hubert, the other to Jan.

The first group, which Hulin designates by the letter G, consists of the following pictures :

Main illustration : *The Kiss of Judas* (Plate 29). Within the initial, Christ, praying on the Mount of Olives. Bas-de-page, Christ scorned (*Heures de Turin*, Plate 15).

Main illustration : *Sts. Julian and Martha in a Sailboat* (Plate 30). Within the initial, the slaughter of the saints (which Hulin excludes from the group). Bas-de-page by an inferior hand (*Heures de Turin*, Plate 30).

Main illustration : *Virgin with Many Female Saints* (Plate 31). Within the initial (by the same master?), Mary, sheltering several figures under her cloak. Bas-de-page, a group of holy women adoring the Lamb. Here, exceptionally, the ornamental framing is rich and perhaps by the same hand (*Heures de Turin*, Plate 36).

Main illustration : *Count William by the Seashore*, already mentioned as crucial to the dating (Plate 32). Within the initial, St. Christopher. Bas-de-page, horsemen in the flat countryside (*Heures de Turin*, Plate 37).

Main illustration : *The Birth of St. John* (Plate 33). Within the initial, God the Father. Bas-de-page, the Baptism of Christ (*Heures de Milan*, Plate 20).

Main illustration : *Mass for the Dead* (with the arms of Holland) (Plate 34). Within the initial, the Last Judgment. Bas-de-page, consecration of a churchyard (*Heures de Milan*, Plate 21).

Main illustration : *The Finding of the True Cross* (Plate 35). Within the initial, the Crucifixion (by the master or his workshop). Bas-de-page, the raising of a dead man by the help of the Holy Cross (workshop of the master) (*Heures de Milan*, Plate 22).

There are some minor doubts on the score of how unitary the style of this group really is. Post⁷, who supports Hulin in every essential respect, nevertheless shares the reservations Dvořák⁸ has voiced concerning the picture of the *Finding of the True Cross*. But since Hulin's judgment is based on intensive study of the originals, of which the other gentlemen have seen only reproductions, I shall stick to the list given above ; and I am even willing to subscribe to the rather hyperbolic phrases in which Hulin sings the praises of this series of miniatures : *Ces sept feuillets forment l'ensemble de peintures le plus merveilleux qui ait jamais décoré un livre, et pour leur époque, l'œuvre la plus stupéfiante que l'histoire de l'Art connaisse. Pour la première fois nous voyons réalisée, dans toutes ses conséquences la conception moderne du tableau*⁹.

It is a fact that these pictures fly in the face of traditional views of the evolution of painting. We see figures of this undoubtedly very early vintage in interiors,

6. Dvořák, *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, Vol. 39, 1918, p. 51 ff.

7. *Loc. cit.*, p. 178.

8. *Loc. cit.*, p. 70.

9. *Loc. cit.*, p. 31.

with landscape views included, of a skill in perspective and mood, such as we do not again find until the 17th century. But it is not the mere skill in conveying the illusion of space, rather the purely visual approach that leaps centuries ahead in its appreciation of the phenomena of light, contrast and integrated tone values. All these elements blend into the total effect of naturalness, with every subtle detail in its assigned place, allowing these small pictures with their often tiny figures to create an impression of dynamic grandeur and dramatic power.

In the *Kiss of Judas* night is about to fall upon the broad scene, and the atmosphere of dusk, enlivened by weird torchlight, is carried through with consistency. The precision of the miniaturist, revealing many details to the peering eye, is at war with the 'picturesque' propensity for blurred outlines. In the background is the city of Jerusalemi, a dark mass outlined against the brightly clouded evening sky, with the Temple rising in the middle—yet on closer scrutiny countless architectural details become visible.

In the *Voyage of St. Julian*, the billowing surface of the water is rendered in striking perspective, skilfully highlighted. The swirling, spraying waters are in wonderful harmony with the ships they bear and with the shores set with woods and battlemented buildings.

The picture of the *Virgin with Female Saints* on either side does less justice to the extraordinary and unusual powers of the master. The group is taken out of spatial context and represented in primitive, idealized form. Yet this brings out all the more clearly, despite their uniform brightness, the bodily shapes of the rather large figures and the pattern of the drapery. The picture reminds one faintly of the so-called Master William of Cologne, and it is most instructive with respect to the view that the painter had his roots in the art of illumination of the 14th century. The women are flowerlike and boneless, narrow-shouldered, with large heads of vacuous beauty. The folds are arranged more to the taste for ornament than from observation. They fall gently downwards, gracefully bending away from each other and then flowing together again, with many lappets and serpentine hemns.

The picture of the mounted prince by the North Sea, sending up prayers of thanks to heaven, offers the utmost in realism and verisimilitude. The happy agitation among the entourage rescued from the sea and now once again feeling solid ground beneath the horses' hooves, the busy dogs, the count bestriding his white horse with exalted dignity, the group of ladies waiting for him in the meadow, the darkling sea behind, its waves lapping beneath a lowering sky against the flat and sandy beach—all this is documented with spontaneity and persuasive conviction. Even without the escutcheon and the historical associations, we feel instinctively that the picture portrays real persons in real events, with which the painter was closely connected. Whether or not he was an eyewitness, the master paints like one, in recording these people in this situation at this spot.

The *Birth of St. John* becomes a welcome occasion to project an interior with ingenuous realism, the furniture, the dog and the cat contrasting oddly with the uncertainly constructed people, who totter about almost like spectres. Despite its less than perfect perspective, the room gives the impression of depth. It is warm and inviting, owing mainly to the incredible accuracy and subtlety, with which the light has been observed.

The narrow bas-de-page, showing the Baptism of Christ, displays a landscape of great naturalism. Despite minutest details, it is held together in the most serene tranquillity, creating an almost timeless impression. Not until much later, beyond Patenier, do we again find a creative feeling for nature capable of projecting so powerful a mood.

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In the *Mass for the Dead*, we behold a church choir in which a coffin has been set up, together with the worshippers, whom we see almost entirely from the rear. The spontaneity of the occasion is boldly enhanced by the fact that the artist took his stand, not in the centre but to one side, so that a tall, many-ribbed pillar on the right overlaps the space and the group. Despite this 'picturesque' shift, the rich Gothic architecture is rendered lovingly and in convincing perspective. The sombre figures of the mourning congregation between the light-hued pillars are pictured in proper proportion to the lofty masonry.

The *Finding of the True Cross* is similar to the *Virgin with Female Saints* in its approach to the figures—the types are archaic and conventional. The master's sense of nature stands revealed in the clouds in the sky, reflecting the evening sun. They are keenly observed in form and texture.

If the master of these miniatures, who just before 1417—the date is firmly established—found the future by his wayside, so to speak, who saw rooms with the eyes of Pieter de Hoogh, the countryside with the eyes of Ruisdael—if this master was not named Hubert or Jan van Eyck, then this name has gained its sonority in error.

Panel Paintings in the Early Eyckian Style

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Among the panel paintings in the Eyckian style are several that have always—i.e. long before the manuscripts of Turin and Milan became known—been reckoned early works, created before the Ghent altarpiece. On account of their archaic character, they have been given to Hubert rather than Jan van Eyck, from the pre-conceived idea that Hubert was the elder master, Jan's forerunner and preceptor. So closely related are these panels to the miniatures that have been described that the single identity of their creator is abundantly evident, as is the conclusion that they were painted about the same time. This group of early panels includes the following :

Two altar wings, a *Crucifixion* and a *Last Judgment*, in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg 1151 (No. 444; 62 × 25 each), transferred from wood to canvas (Plate 36). This altarpiece, which once included a central *Adoration*, now missing, was acquired by the Russian envoy, D. P. Tatizchev, in Spain and bequeathed to the Petersburg Gallery in 1845.

The panels are unusually narrow, and in the *Crucifixion* the large numbers of mourners and soldiers are arrayed vertically. The hill seems to slope upwards steeply, and although the perspective from below is not consistently carried out for the figures at the top, the whole impression—with the mourners down below, to the fore and at some distance from the throng about the three crosses—is memorable and dramatic, a striking solution to a difficult problem in composition. In the panel of the *Last Judgment*, a wealth of figures is accommodated in symmetrical order with astonishing skill, the art of the miniaturist managing to master a cosmic scale. Both panels, as well as their frames, bear numerous Latin inscriptions, quotations from the Apocalypse and other parts of Scripture.

The Three Marys at the Tomb, in Richmond, collection of Sir Herbert Cook 1161 (71.5 × 89) (Plate 37A)¹.

This panel has been liberally exhibited on a number of occasions, in London and elsewhere, thus becoming known to many art experts. It was on view at the Burlington Club in 1892 (the catalogue of this exhibition carries a reproduction in photogravure), at Bruges in 1902 (No. 7) and at the Guildhall in London in 1906. The arms of Philip de Commynes, in the lower right-hand corner, were apparently added later, about 1470, when the painting was in the possession of that gentleman. Since the 18th century the picture has been demonstrably in the Wynckelman, Bauwens and Middleton (Brussels) collections, then in England with Sir Charles Robinson, who brought it into the Cook collection.

The painting is well-preserved, but not perfectly. Some of the pigments have deteriorated, a few portions are hidden beneath an opaque varnish and there are traces of retouching in the sky. The overall mood of the painting is one of eventide in the broad countryside. The white angel at the centre is marvellously picked out with

1. A *Resurrection*, currently in the Hansen Gallery, Lucerne, [17] shares several features with the Cook painting (Plate 37B).

light, while the three women make a limp and incorporeal effect. The three sleeping soldiers, on the other hand, are most impressive, especially the portly one, genrelike in his earthiness, whose whole posture and demeanour stand in comic contrast to his magnificent warrior's panoply.

Crucifixion with Mary and St. John, in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin 181 (No. 525 F; 44 × 30) (Plate 38 A). This painting, unknown until then, was acquired from a British art dealer in 1897. It seems to have once been in Russian hands, for it has been transferred from wood to canvas by a dubious process used almost exclusively by Russian restorers. By and large, the transfer was successful, but the texture of the canvas is perceptible, having slightly impaired the smooth enamel of the colour surface throughout and diminished its luminosity. The figures, especially Mary, are conceived in terms of statuary. St. John weeps as he turns away, drying his eyes with his upraised left hand.

The Virgin in the Church, in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin 191 (No. 525 C; 31 × 14) (Plate 39). This painting, acquired with the Suermondt collection in 1814, is apparently identical with a painting in the Nau collection at Nantes, described by Laborde². His measurements, however, read 43 × 25 cm, and may have included the original frame, the inscriptions of which Laborde noted down. This frame was lost when the painting was stolen in Berlin. Two free copies, in diptychs at Antwerp 1201 and Rome (Galleria Doria 1211) date from a much later period 1221.

The church interior in the painting agrees in many details with that in the *Mass for the Dead* of the Turin-Milan Prayer Book. The resemblance is of such kind that one can scarcely imagine the architecture in either painting as having been taken over from the other. It would seem rather that on both occasions the master made free adaptations of the same real model. The Berlin panel shows far more of the cathedral nave than the miniature. The Petersburg altar wings, the panel in the Cook collection and the Berlin *Crucifixion* have been considered a single group—quite apart from the study of the miniatures—an expression of the same creative power that went into the Ghent altarpiece, but antedating that great work. As for the *Virgin in the Church*, it was brought into this same context only by Hulin, from a study of the miniatures.

Many interrelationships have been uncovered between this group of archaic panel paintings, on the one hand, and the Turin-Milan Prayer Book, on the other—and also with the Ghent altarpiece. Quite apart from the church interior of the *Mass for the Dead*, which recurs in the Berlin *Virgin*, it is clearly the self-same individual creative imagination that manifests itself in both the illuminations and the panel paintings, giving them their especial and extraordinary character. Here as there, the crucial elements are the vividly dramatic and open compositional approach, the feeling for nature in the landscape aspects, the power of the lighting to project mood and the genrelike earthiness. The works that have been described do not form a unitary group, but rather constitute links in a chain. First come the miniatures, then the Petersburg diptych, finally the Berlin *Crucifixion* and the Ghent altarpiece. The growth and maturing of a master breathe from these works—especially in the

2. *Les Ducs de Bourgogne, II L—La Renaissance des Arts à la Cour de France*, Vol. I, p. 604 ff.

modifications of the drapery. Flowing rather limply at the outset, the fabric becomes gathered up with more and more vigour and depth.

The concatenation between the 'early' panel paintings and the Ghent altarpiece is indisseverable. Those curiously massed white clouds, like clusters of grapes, enliven the sky in several of the miniatures, as well as in the Berlin *Crucifixion* and the Ghent altarpiece. The pine tree, found among the tropical flora of the Ghent altarpiece, recurs in the Berlin *Crucifixion*. That mysterious word AGLA, which we encountered in the Ghent altarpiece (see p. 25, above), likewise recurs, partially in Greek script, in the Petersburg *Last Judgment*. Michael's round shield bears the legend *Adoravi tetgramathon agla*³. Closest kin to the *Virgin in the Church* are the female saints adoring the Holy Lamb.

The master, whose path can be traced in all these works from 1416 to about the time of the Ghent altarpiece, can be none other than Hubert, unless it be Jan van Eyck. Hulin's conviction of having discovered Hubert in the Turin-Milan Prayer Book rests on his belief that here too Jan had a hand.

Group H of the miniatures, supposedly comprising works of Jan's youth, consists of the following :

Main illustration : *God the Father* in a tabernacle with angels (Plate 40). Within the initial, a man at prayer. Bas-de-page, seven angelic musicians (*Heures de Turin*, Plate 13).

Main illustration : *The Lamentation* (Plate 41) (*Heures de Turin*, Plate 29).

Main illustration : *The Agony in the Garden* (Plate 42) (*Heures de Milan*, Plate 23).

Main illustration : *The Crucifixion* (Plate 43)⁴ (*Heures de Milan*, Plate 24).

I do not challenge the contention that these form indeed a group. I have not seen the originals, hence lack the audacity to dispute the scholar who studied them so carefully. Yet I cannot dismiss reservations concerning the all-important dating. Unless these illuminations were done at the same time as those of Group G, i.e. shortly before 1417, the whole construction collapses. Actually, the work of embellishing the Prayer Book was by no means completed in 1417. Several hands, some of them of little talent, worked on it as imitators of the Eyckian style. Hulin has recorded their additions. The *Lamentation* and the *Agony in the Garden*, which Hulin regards as particularly characteristic expressions of his second master—i.e. Jan—lack inspired sweep and convincing originality; they are dry and laborious, by comparison. The *Agony* scene fails altogether to derive mood and expressiveness from the landscape and lighting. Details of form obtrude painfully. The play and fold of the drapery is full of clashing straight lines and substitutes confusion for a sense of harmony.

If Jan van Eyck indeed created these miniatures about 1417, he was little more than an imitator who had no inkling of the deepest powers possessed by his brother and aspired to a sober and earthbound naturalism, when dealing with the human body and its vestures.

3. Durrieu, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1920, Vol. 1, p. 77 ff.

4. A panel painting that conforms rather closely to this *Crucifixion* is preserved in the Franchetti Collection [23], Venice (*Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, Vol. 23, p. 33 ff. and Vol. 26, p. iii ff.) (Plate 38 B). It seems scarcely plausible that this weak copy should have been done directly from the miniature. Perhaps there was an Eyckian panel painting that served as the common model for both the miniature and the Venice picture.

Hubert and Jan as the Masters of the Ghent Altarpiece

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We should expect to find in the Ghent altarpiece the two styles that Hulin has distinguished in the Prayer Book. According to the inscription, Hubert began the work—some time before 1426—while Jan finished it in the year 1432. When Jan was summoned to the task, he had been separated from his brother for some years, geographically and perhaps spiritually. On his distant journeys, his imagination had fed on other stuff than Hubert's. We would expect that the styles of the two brothers had grown apart since the time they shared a studio—if, indeed, they ever did share one.

A firm notion in the unending discussion over the Ghent altarpiece has been that Hubert 'naturally' began with the great figures of the fixed centrepiece, God the Father, St. John and the Virgin. This pre-judgment seemed to be confirmed by the hieratic monumentality of these figures, altogether wanting in Jan's authenticated panel paintings. It is indeed in the upper tier of the open altarpiece that the most glaring discrepancy becomes noticeable—at the points where Adam and Eve, seen from below in overlapping perspective that projects the illusion of living bodies, abut on panels with an effect of flatness that pays no heed to the demands of perspective from below; and it is here that we are inclined to draw the sought-for dividing line. A change in the total design at the hands of the second master seems to manifest itself at precisely these places. Again, of all the parts of the Ghent altarpiece, it is the Annunciation on the outside that most closely resembles Jan's authenticated panel paintings. Then too, the curious location of the donor couple requires explanation, and the inscription closely associates Jan's name with that of the donors and with the completion of the work. Hence we may well believe that the entire outside is part of an altered second plan—and Jan's work.

With the persuasive tones of professorial self-assurance, Dvořák has detailed the arguments by which he has distinguished Hubert's share from that of Jan¹. Apart from the three central figures of the upper tier, he leaves to the first master part of the lower centre field, where he professes to see Hubert's archaic style of flat design clash with the more spatial style of Jan. This careful and closely reasoned analysis might seem to solve every aspect of the puzzle. Hubert recedes into the shadows, a man still in thrall to the Middle Ages, while Jan blazes the trail towards the shining light. Dvořák is able to make his argument only by introducing bias and prejudice into his observations—or so it seems to me. He greatly exaggerates stylistic contrasts, leaving out of account the degree to which such differences are rooted in scale and subject matter. Whenever I read such sleek and tidy solutions to the age-old problem—and the Eyck literature holds several more examples, less well-founded and perhaps scarcely worth reporting—I am reminded of the warning and counsel my teacher Ludwig Scheibler gave me 30 years ago—never to concern myself with distinguishing the shares in the Ghent altarpiece, because it was a profitless venture. I failed to heed his advice, yet in the end I have had to acknowledge that I have not succeeded in achieving a clean division.

¹. *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, Vol. 24, 1904, p. 161 ff.

When we glance at the authenticated panel paintings Jan did immediately upon the completion of the Ghent altarpiece, we assuredly find no portion of that great work he would have been incapable of executing, that went beyond his creative powers. Yet the whole design, arrangement and composition of the altarpiece are strange in effect, lack harmony and unity of style. This impression accords with the documented fact that Jan, in the case of the Ghent altarpiece, was working on a project not of his own conception. The patchwork character of the altarpiece can scarcely be explained on the assumption that one master did this part, the other that, the juxtaposed parts failing to conform properly to one another. A more likely theory is that it was Hubert who conceived the whole thing, or at least most of it, that he drew the compositions, did the underpainting and even finished some of the panels, while Jan was compelled to come to terms with this work of another, finally going over all the panels, in order to achieve the harmony he sought. If this theory hits the mark, the conspicuous variations in style flow from the constraint Hubert's design imposed in varying degree upon his executor.

If we knew Hubert only as the master who planned the Ghent altarpiece, our crucial questions in respect of Hulin's findings from his study of the Turin-Milan Prayer Book would be formulated as follows : Is the person who composed the Ghent altarpiece identical with the miniaturist of Group G ; and is the painter who completed the Ghent altarpiece identical with the miniaturist of Group H ?

I should like to pose a third question, as an alternative : Could not the miniaturist of Group G be identical with the painter who completed the Ghent altarpiece—in particular, with the painter who did the figures of Adam and Eve, and the Annunciation—in other words, with Jan van Eyck ?

There is one rather clear distinction between the two groups of miniatures. It concerns the fall of the drapery. A rich and highly diverse sense of movement marks the fabrics in the Ghent altarpiece. The folds are deepened, their firmness enhanced, by the large format, the monumental character sought for—all of which heightens the illusion of space. The soft, archaic, flowing forms of Group G are nowhere to be found in the Ghent altarpiece, any more than the brittle, jagged forms of Group H. Even in the panels attributed to Jan with the greatest confidence—such as the Annunciation—arched and curved lines are found side by side with stiff, straight ones. In the later, authenticated paintings by Jan, we observe a similar treatment of drapery, with rectilinear patterns increasing, and surely this suggests a development of soft forms towards hard, as we would have anticipated from the outset. This alone makes us doubt whether Jan could have done Group H in the Prayer Book before 1417, i.e. in his youth. Certain bodily details—in particular the hands of the Christ, the Baptist and the Virgin, but also those of Adam and Eve—are modelled with vigour and with an understanding of bone structure. In Jan's authenticated work such fleshly realism is scarcely to be found. If, on the other hand, we take this firm attack, this three-dimensional clarity, to be virtues of Hubert, Group G of the miniatures, the supposed work of his youth, provides no corroboration for such a disposition.

The most searching examination of the Ghent altarpiece gives no enlightenment. Oddly enough, while it seems so multiform at first glance, when an attempt is made to dissect it, it flows together like a fluid.

The miniatures of Group G are undoubtedly a stage preliminary to the altarpiece, to which they are joined by the intermediate stages of the early panel paintings. The master of these miniatures marches in the van of Netherlandish painters. If Hulin's theory met with approval, it may have been primarily from a sense of satisfaction that the *pictor maior quo nemo repertus* seemed at last to emerge into the light. Apart from the faith in the written word that views the Ghent inscription as gospel, responsibility for pushing Hubert to the fore may be shared by the general human tendency to esteem the obscure more highly than the manifest. In the more recent literature, Jan van Eyck is assiduously played down in favour of Hubert. As early as 1861 Weale wrote this curious sentence : *Il [Jean] n'égale jamais Hubert ni dans l'élevation des idées, ni dans le dessin du corps humain, ni dans ses draperies, ni dans l'harmonie de son coloris*².

In the face of a creation like the Arnolfini portrait in London, I have no heart for taking a hand in Jan's denigration. I cannot bring myself to believe that he was his brother's imitator in any sense, and I have yet to see anyone explain away the phenomenon that his was the name to which all the glory became attached, while Hubert's fell into complete oblivion. We have every reason for venturing at least the attempt to fit the miniatures of Group G into Jan's work, the more so since a voice from the distant past has told us that Jan was a miniature painter, while we know no such thing—nor, for that matter, anything else—about Hubert. Another cogent reason is that Jan was demonstrably in the service of the brother and predecessor of the prince for whom these miniatures were painted. The pine in the Berlin *Crucifixion* may commemorate Jan's documented journeys. Petrus Christus knew the *Last Judgment* in St. Petersburg, or at least a composition of this kind, for in 1452, when he painted his altar wing, now in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, he made ample use of it. In terms of time and geography, we can virtually rule out the possibility that he had any relationship to Hubert van Eyck, yet there are many good reasons for believing that he was a disciple of Jan van Eyck. There is always the chance, of course, that Hubert's composition might have come down to this Bruges imitator by way of Jan, but it seems far more probable that Petrus Christus followed a model by Jan, as he did in other instances.

Each one of these arguments carries little weight, when taken by itself; but in the mass they may well counterbalance the Ghent inscription.

2. Catalogue du Musée de l'Académie de Bruges, p. 12.

Unsigned Panel Paintings in the Mature Eyckian Style

There are a number of paintings that have, from their style, been attributed to Jan van Eyck, although they lack his signature, perhaps because the original frames with their inscriptions have been lost. They are bust-length portraits of men and full-figure religious compositions, and they fall, more or less, into the same mould as his authenticated paintings.

The *Portrait of a Cardinal*, in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (No. 624; 35 × 29), may be considered a virtually authenticated work by Jan van Eyck, for certain dates pertaining to its subject point in his direction (Plate 44). Weale has established that this Prince of the Church (identified only as the 'Cardinal of Sancta Cruce' in an inventory of the Archduke Leopold William, dated 1659 [24]) was in fact named Nicolo Albergati¹. Born in Bologna in 1375, he received the red hat in 1426, with the Church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme as his titular church. He lived in Bologna, but was repeatedly sent on missions to the North. He visited the Netherlands in 1431, to be received with full honours by the Duke of Burgundy. He made sojourns in several Flemish cities, including Bruges, between 8th and 11th December. The painting was certainly not done during this brief stay, but Jan van Eyck did then make the silverpoint drawing, now in the Dresden Kupferstichkabinett² (Plate 45). The painting follows this drawing with great fidelity. Jan van Eyck may even have seen the Cardinal in Ghent about this time, if, indeed, he was then working on the altarpiece, for Albergati is known to have stopped in that town too. In any event, the Vienna portrait represents a work by Jan van Eyck from the time when he was working on the Ghent altarpiece. If we need any supporting evidence that he did indeed paint the portrait of Jodocus Vijd, a comparison with the portrait of Albergati provides it. In the entire Eyckian œuvre, there are no two works that match as well as the heads of Vijd and the Cardinal.

The drawing in Dresden is more delicate than the painting in Vienna and holds more individual life. The painting is a bit on the hard and stiff side. This discrepancy between drawing and painting is fully explained by the unusual way in which the portrait came about. The Cardinal was much preoccupied during his journey and could spare the painter, to whom he was a complete stranger, but a single session. In executing the painting, Jan van Eyck had only his silverpoint sketch to go by. On it he had noted all the tints³, while his pencil had held fast every detail of form his keen eye observed.

Jan van Eyck may have been in the habit of preparing preliminary drawings for all or some of his portraits. We cannot prove it, one way or another. In any event, if he did proceed in this fashion, he must have usually been in a position to check and correct his first impression from life, enhancing the painting beyond the drawing. We need not assume that all his sketches were as detailed and precise as this one, nor that his paintings were always less lifelike.

1. *Loc. cit.*, p. 57 ff.

2. Woermann, *Handzeichnungen des Dresdener Kupferstichkabinetts*, Plate 1.

3. The colour notes, in part hard to decipher, are carefully reproduced in Weale, p. 61. In Voll's judgment (*loc. cit.*, p. 75 ff.), the drawing is a copy after the painting, one of the more incomprehensible miscarriages of art criticism.

The *Portrait of a Man*, in the Bruckenthal Gallery, Hermannstadt 1251 (17.4 × 11), is closer to the *Tymotheus* in London than any other painting and yields little to that painting in terms of lifelike individuality (Plate 46). It is certainly a work by Jan van Eyck, done about 1433. The panel had been added to all round, and the monogram of Dürer was also added. Cleaning has rather sharpened the effect of the colours and impaired their harmony. Almost unknown prior to 1902, the painting received its proper due at the Bruges exhibition that year. By analogy with the *Portrait of Jan de Leeuw* in Vienna, we may conclude from the ring the sitter holds in his right hand that he too was a goldsmith.

The *Portrait of a Knight of the Golden Fleece*, in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin, 1261 (No. 525G; 26 × 19.5), was acquired on the London art market in 1902 (Plate 47). It comes from Modena, where it was in the possession of the Marchese di Coccapani, and was published by Weale⁴. Since the subject wears the chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece, the painting must date from after 1430. Weale has shown that it portrays Messire Baudouin de Lannoy, y-clept le Besque, Seigneur de Molembais. A drawing, evidently made from this painting, is in the Codex of the Municipal Library at Arras, which contains many drawings from portraits of princes and notables (Photo Giraudon). The name is written under this drawing. Born in 1386 or 1387, Baudouin did not die until 1474, having held high office in the service of the House of Burgundy. We must judge him to have been at least 50 at the time the portrait was painted, perhaps more than that, hence it must date from the period close to Jan van Eyck's death.

A strong sense of duty speaks from the lean, jutting and sharp-featured face, which bears an expression of inflexible judicial dignity. The proud brocade gown, the white staff, symbol of high office, the great black hat, the ceremonial chain—all these underline a certain spiritual quality in this countenance, leaving the impression of a dignitary who takes his duties seriously and chafes under his burden of responsibility.

The *Portrait of Giovanni Arnolfini*, in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin 1271 (No. 523A; 29 × 20), was bought at the C. J. Nieuwenhuys auction in London in 1886 (No. 67) (Plate 48). It shows, in half-length, with both hands in view, the gentleman we already know from the London double portrait, a man whose oddly shaped skull is rather reminiscent of that of a horse. The painting was formerly in the collection of the Earl of Shrewsbury (Alton Towers) and had been sold in 1857 (No. 76). It is by no means a detail copied from the London painting, but represents an altogether different rendering, made about the same time, showing the face half-turned away towards the light. By comparison with Jan's other portraits, there is a certain emptiness of form (possibly due to slight overcleaning) in this face with its sleepy and stupid eyes, its long nose with its large nostrils, almost on the verge of effeminacy and degeneracy. The turbanlike head covering in red, the green robe with its reddish-brown fur-trimming and the brown flesh tints all stand out warmly against the dark ground.

The Man with the Pinks came to the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin 1281 (No. 525A; 40 × 31), with the Suermondt collection, having been in the Engels collection

4. *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Vol. 24, 1900, p. 173 ff.; *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 5, 1904, p. 408.

at Cologne prior to 1867 (Plate 49 A). It is hard to fit into the series of portraits Jan van Eyck painted between 1430 and 1440. The painted frame moulding is without parallel. Coloration, style and concept all join to form a rather odd effect. The colour scheme is pale and cool, a dim grey overall, the flesh of a coppery shade. The encompassing and organizing chiaroscuro that usually points up van Eyck's portraiture, so to speak, is lacking. The face rather resembles a map on which a multiplicity of form and detail has been somewhat painstakingly recorded, like streets and roads—outlines of eyes, nose and knife-sharp mouth, folds and wrinkles. As a work of van Eyck's youth, the painting might be plausible. There is something touching about the naïve and excessively scrupulous draughtsmanship, something rigid and old-fashioned in the expression of this face that reminds one of a deaf mute, desperately and fruitlessly struggling to speak.

About his neck the old gentleman wears a St. Anthony's Cross with a little bell—he is a Knight of the Order of St. Anthony. This order⁵ was established by Albert of Bavaria in 1382 and was apparently conferred only on men in the civil service of this Bavarian earldom, or at least on those who were in some way close to Albert's descendants; that is to say, William, John and Jacqueline. Jan van Eyck did work for John of Bavaria at The Hague between 1422 and 1425, and the style of *The Man with the Pinks* is not incompatible with the assumption that he may have painted the portrait during those years.

At Velen Castle, Westphalia, in the possession of Count Landsberg-Velen und Gemen⁶, there is an *Adoration of the Magi*, the eldest King in which is copied after *The Man with the Pinks* (Plate 49 B). This painting is usually attributed to the Master of the Holy Kindred and was thus identified at the Düsseldorf exhibition in 1904 (No. 41)⁷. In my view, it is by the Master of the Aachen Altarpiece who was active in Cologne about 1500⁸. Barthel Bruyn made use of the composition of his Cologne predecessor in the triptych now in the Bachofen collection, Basle⁹ (1301). He discarded van Eyck's actual portrait in favour of another, possibly of his donor, but kept van Eyck's hand (Plate 49 C). *The Man with the Pinks* turned up in private ownership in Cologne only in the 19th century, although it may well have been in that city ever since about 1500, leaving a profound impression upon its inhabitants.

A Donor, in the Leipzig Museum (No. 511; 26.4 × 19.5) is only a fragment, and even so imperfectly preserved (Plate 50 A). It came to the collection in 1878, a gift of Frau Amalie von Ritzenberg. In style and draughtsmanship it bears all the marks of the mature Eyckian style. The damage it has suffered must be taken into account, of course. The overpainting of the background has trespassed upon the contours of head and hands, and the interior forms have yielded detail and harmony under the restorer's hand¹⁰.

The *Head of a Man*, in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin 1311 (No. 523 c 1321; 11.5 × 8.8), does not, in point of fact, bear the character of a portrait to any marked degree (Plate 50 B). It was acquired by Wilhelm von Bode in Florence in 1895. It is reminiscent of several of the heads among the grouped figures in the Ghent altarpiece and is probably a section cut out of a larger painting. It harks back even more insistently to the head in the *Fountain of Life* at Madrid, once considered a portrait of

5. Weale, loc. cit., p. 123.

6. Catalogue published by Brückmann, Plate 13.

7. *Amtliche Berichte aus den Königlichen Kunstsammlungen*, Berlin, 1917, col. 221 ff.

8. A reproduction in the publication (on the collection), 1907, No. 11.

9. *Meisterwerke des Städtischen Museums zu Leipzig*, Munich, 1907, Plate 3.

Hubert van Eyck, more recently of Philip the Bold. (See further on, p.70 ff.)

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The *Virgin and Child with Chancellor Rolin*, in the Louvre (No. 162; 66 × 62), occupies the foremost rank, in grandeur and significance, among the unsigned votive paintings in the mature Eyckian style (Plate 51). The panel comes from Autun in Burgundy, and was commissioned by Nicolas Rolin, who rose to high honours in the service of Philip the Good and became Chancellor of Burgundy and Brabant in 1422. As is invariably true in these cases, the donor's age defies precise definition. One is likely to judge him to be closer to 60 than to 50. Rolin was in fact 60 years old at the time the van der Paele altarpiece was painted, and the style on its own points to this period. Personally, I am inclined to put the Rolin panel after the van der Paele altarpiece rather than before it. True, thematically the composition is simpler; but the whole work is done with proud self-assurance and mastery, its infinite riches spread out before us with the utmost clarity. The cloak of the Virgin, who is seated on the right, is draped in a fashion similar to the van der Paele altarpiece, in a sweeping cascade of straight and curved lines, shrouding her body deeply and generously. Her grave and modest face is youthful and virginal, of far greater beauty than in the van der Paele altarpiece. The child, securely seated on his mother's lap, displays the same full-bodied flesh as the child in the van der Paele panel, and his body is modelled with the same care. The light is especially sharp, creating equally sharp shadows and reflections and articulating everything. Face and hands of the donor, for example, are invested with an astonishing sense of clarity. The dark purple-and-gold brocade robe of the Chancellor enlivens the left side of the painting with its sombre glory, counterbalanced by the marvellous coruscation of the Virgin's crown at upper right. The wealth of detail in the foreground chamber is arranged with such mastery that it forms a receding frame for the broad sweep of the landscape, visible through the three arched openings in the centre and expanding into the distance. The view is of a rich and busy countryside, traversed by a winding river that flows towards us, both of its banks lined by a great city. There is an opulence to it, and a wealth of topographical detail, proudly and lovingly displayed; and it seems to cry out for identification as the depiction of a real town that had some significance to painter or donor. Bruges is out of the question, of course. In fact, the significant features—the wide river, the island, the bridge, the range of hills—have been nowhere convincingly recognized, neither in Liège, nor in Maastricht, nor in Lyons. The tower to the right of the river, close by the bank, resembles that of Utrecht Cathedral and also occurs in the background of the *Adoration of the Lamb* in the Ghent altarpiece. The great Gothic church further to the right, on the other hand, looks like a structure in the French style. The view must be accepted as a free rendering, nourished from memories of places the painter had seen, the idealized image of a teeming, well-situated town. This interpretation is confirmed by the background of the Rothschild panel (see further on), which contains a city along similar lines, with the same bridge—though with towers that are different. It too seems alive, the portrayal of a real place.

The *Lucca Madonna*, in the Städelisches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt (No. 89; 65.5 × 49.5) takes its name from its former owner, the Duke of Lucca (Plate 52). Nieuwen-

huys procured this panel for King William II of Holland, at whose famous auction on 12th August 1850 it was bought by the Frankfurt gallery for 3,000 guilders. The general arrangement is reminiscent of the *Ince Hall Virgin* of 1433—the Virgin is seated in a plain and narrow cell, into which light enters sharply from the left; her adornment is in orderly array; within the dusky chamber, reflections are struck from brocade, metal objects, a glass vessel and two oranges. The Virgin's cloak is draped with rather more quietude than in the *Ince Hall* painting. This well-preserved work must date from about 1437, approximately the same time as the *Rolin Madonna*. The two Virgin's seem closely related in type¹⁰.

The *Virgin and Child with St. Barbara, St. Elisabeth (?) and a Donor*, in the possession of Baron Robert de Rothschild, Paris 1341 (35.5 × 48) (Plate 53), shares the sense of unity that marks the *Lucca Madonna*. I have seen the original but once, a long long time ago, and my judgment is necessarily based in the main on reproductions¹¹.

The provenance of this panel is shrouded in complete obscurity. It was in the possession of the Paris branch of the Rothschild family prior to 1860—first with Baron James, who reputedly acquired it from Nieuwenhuys, later with Gustave, father of the present owner. Weale states unequivocally that the donor, a Carthusian monk being commended to the Virgin by St. Barbara, is Dom Herman Steenken, who, as early as 1402, became Vicar of the Convent of St. Anne, near Bruges, and died in 1428¹². He dates the painting, in which the donor appears to be of youthful age, from the period between 1406 and 1420. Judging from the style, I cannot accept this, quite apart from the unlikelihood that Jan van Eyck was then in Bruges. Again going purely by the style, I arrive at a date around 1439. Weale never set forth the considerations that suggested the identity of the Carthusian dignitary to him; and in the second edition of his book on the van Eycks¹³, we read this carefully worded sentence: 'The Carthusian portrayed may be Dom Herman Steenken.' Hence his reasons would seem to have lost conviction even in his own eyes. His original opinion in respect of the donor—and the dating that flowed from it—are readily refuted, if it is accepted that the Carthusian monk in the *Exeter Madonna* at Berlin represents the same donor. This painting¹⁴, copied in part after the Rothschild panel, is by the hand of Petrus Christus and can scarcely have been done before 1444. Once we assume that the Carthusian monk portrayed commissioned the Rothschild panel from Jan van Eyck shortly before 1440, the Berlin panel from Petrus Christus soon after 1444 (he does indeed look a bit older in the Berlin painting), all difficulties disappear, my dating based on the style is confirmed and Weale's identification of the donor cannot be maintained.

In most of its qualities, this broad panel, originally perhaps the centre of a triptych, fits well into the sequence of devotional paintings Jan van Eyck created between 1431 and 1441. Everything is as we have come to expect—the architecture, in the transitional style, with its finely chiseled capitals, the rich and intricate tile floor, the Oriental rug, the canopy of brocade, the Virgin's cloak, hemmed with jewels. The landscape comes very close to that in the *Rolin Madonna*, yet it is by no means copied from that painting. The Virgin's head closely resembles the *Lucca Madonna*, although the child does not have quite the same firmness. With the reser-

10. The best reproductions, by no means of good quality, in rather smudgy photogravure, appear in Plates 1, 2 and 3 of *Tableaux Peu Connus*, by S. Reinach, who gives the dimensions as 50 × 66 cm, in conflict with Weale [35].

11. *Loc. cit.*, p. 112.

12. The smaller volume, published with Brockwell in 1912, p. 78.

13. Cf. the later chapter on Petrus Christus, p. 86 f.

vations made necessary by my limited knowledge of the original—especially its state of preservation—I believe the Rothschild panel betrays a lessening of creative power, as though the master, painting the same things in the same arrangement over and over, had allowed his spontaneity and enchantment to congeal ever so slightly into routine. The folds in the donor's white cassock resemble sharp, deep, straight slits and stiffen the figure into sober firmness. The style of the drapery is a degree less luxuriant and imaginative than in the van der Paele panel, for example. The van Maelbeke altarpiece (admittedly problematical) is particularly well calculated to tell us about the late phases of Jan van Eyck's art. It too shows drapery that is notably stiff and straight, and the child is articulated rather as in the Rothschild panel. This seems to me to support my feeling that the latter painting was done about 1440.

The *Triptych in the Dresden Gallery* (No. 799; 27 × 21.5; shutters, 27 × 8) was once in the Jabach collection at Cologne, where it was attributed to Hubert van Eyck (Plates 54, 55). In the 18th century at Dresden, it went as a Dürer; since about 1840 under the name of Jan van Eyck 1361. It was celebrated in the literature everywhere as a work of Jan's, until the strange aberrations of more recent vintage tore it from the context of authenticated works by Jan, giving it to his reputedly greater brother. The integrity of this altarpiece, which is small enough to be called a miniature, is completely unimpaired, all of its parts being of equal perfection¹⁴. The panels are extremely well preserved, except for the Virgin's robe, which was completely painted over, by E. Bendemann, according to the Dresden catalogue. The frame is adorned with an inscription praising the Virgin, the Archangel and St. Catherine, in Jan's wonted style. The legend on the centre panel—*Haec est speciosior sole et super omnem dispositionem 1371 stellarum luci comparata invenitur prior...*—coincides with that on the frame of the van der Paele altarpiece. The arms at upper right in the framing are said to be of the Genoese family of Giustiniani (according to the Dresden catalogue, which cites the authority of Privy Councillor Dielitz).

On the exterior of the wings is an *Annunciation*, painted in grisaille.

When the shutters are opened, the centrepiece shows the Virgin enthroned in the nave of a church seen in symmetrical perspective, with columns on the right and left that are progressively foreshortened and partially overlap. The architectural forms, like the interior decorations, are in agreement with authenticated works by Jan, but never suggest slavish imitation that might point to another hand. On the left panel, with the donor, is the Archangel Michael, in a suit of armour similar to that worn by St. George in the van der Paele altarpiece. On the right is St. Catherine.

Taking into account the minuscule scale to which this Dresden altarpiece owes its air of extraordinary delicacy and serene felicity, one may unhesitatingly range it between the Arnolfini painting in London (1434) and the van der Paele altarpiece (1436). In its main outlines, the drapery of St. Catherine's robe coincides with the bride in the Arnolfini panel.

Two virtually identical paintings of the *Stigmatization of St. Francis*—one in the Turin gallery, the other in the John G. Johnson Collection at Philadelphia—represent a singular challenge (Plate 56). They coincide in almost every detail, as though they were copies, one of the other, apparently facing the critic with only the single

14. Weale's notion that both Hubert and Jan worked on it (*loc. cit.*, p. 200) is as absurd as Voll's insistence (*loc. cit.*, p. 39 ff.) that only the centrepiece is by Jan, the shutters being of lesser value.

problem of determining which is the original. As it happens, neither panel shows features that might unmistakably identify it as a copy. It may seem evasive to suggest that the master painted them both, either copying his own work, or working twice from the same preliminary drawing; but, surprisingly, this hypothesis finds support in an ancient document. Anselmo Adornes, of the Genoese family of this name—born in Bruges in 1424 and thus only 17 years old when Jan van Eyck died—left a last will, dated 10th February 1470, in which he bequeathed to each of his two daughters, both of them nuns, a painting of St. Francis by Jan van Eyck's hand. The text is unmistakable: *Item zo gheve ic elken van myn lieve dochters... een tavereele, daerinne dat Sinte Franssen in portraiture van meester Jans handt van Heyck ghemaect staet...* There is an added instruction that the paintings are to be equipped with wings on which are to be painted his own portrait and that of his wife. In all likelihood, the Turin and Philadelphia panels are the very ones Adornes left to his daughters and quite evidently Adornes regarded both as originals by Jan van Eyck and of equal value—unless we are to assume that, like Nathan's 'Man in the East' (*Mann im Osten* (Lessing)) with his ring, he had the original clandestinely copied.

The head of St. Francis has all the marks of a portrait, of the same sitter in both panels. Presumably, the patron bore the name of the saint, whom he had portrayed with his own features. Since Anselmo Adornes owned both versions and disposed of them with such reverence, it seems plausible that his father may have been that donor. I have been unable, unfortunately, to establish that he was indeed named Francis.

The painting in the John G. Johnson collection¹⁵ is 12.5 × 14.5 cm, that at Turin 28 × 33 cm. Lord Heytesbury, from whom Johnson bought the smaller painting in 1890, is said to have received it from Lisbon in 1830¹⁶. Early in the 19th century, the Turin panel was in the possession of a nun at Casale in Piedmont.

St. Francis is kneeling on thickly sodded ground, in a rather vaguely defined locale that is almost completely encircled by outcrops of rock. His posture is tranquil, more like that of a donor than a saint ecstatically receiving the stigmata. Dramatic expression has been sacrificed to the portrait commission. The stiff and somewhat harsh fall of the drapery is reminiscent of the Rothschild panel, especially the robe of St. Barbara in the latter. I incline to date the *St. Francis* about 1438, which is at odds with the arguments adduced for a Portuguese origin, about 1429. These include the Lisbon provenance of one specimen, the southern flora—particularly the hollylike plant that creeps along the ground—and, finally, the brown Franciscan cassock¹⁷. I find myself unable to give these arguments much weight. If the two panels were in Bruges in 1470, the fact that in the 19th century one turned up in Lisbon, the other in Piedmont, proves nothing in respect of their place of origin. Jan van Eyck could very well have painted his subtropical plants from nature studies he brought back to Bruges. Similarly, he may have first seen Franciscans in the South, robed in brown—if indeed the members of this order still went about in grey in the Netherlands in his time.

The *Annunciation*, in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg (No. 433; 92 × 38) 1381, is a tall, narrow painting, apparently the left wing of a triptych (Plate 57), and merits serious attention as the remnant of an important and more voluminous work.

15. No. 314 in the catalogue of this collection.

16. Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*, Vol. 6, p. 389.

17. Weale, on p. 132 of his large book, explains that the reformed Franciscans exchanged brown for grey as the colour of their habit. Since this change did not reach the Netherlands until late in the 15th century, he concludes that the Southern origin is proved beyond doubt.

Transferred from wood to canvas, it has suffered comparatively little from this hazardous procedure. Allegedly, it comes from Dijon and may thus have been part of an altarpiece created for Philip of Burgundy. Nieuwenhuys, through whose hands so many van Eyck pictures passed, is said to have brought it from Dijon to Paris and to have sold it to King William II of Holland, at whose auction in 1850 the Petersburg gallery paid 5,375 guilders for it.

The church interior in which the Virgin receives the angel's message is put down with the scrupulous expertise of an architectural historian, and one is tempted to conclude that it must have existed somewhere exactly as here depicted. Yet closer scrutiny and consideration lead to the conviction that this curious architecture is the painter's own invention. So deeply had the Romanesque style in Tournay and elsewhere captured his imagination that his innate architectural vision enabled him to create interior spaces with complete freedom in each of his paintings, in keeping with the proportions of the panel and the demands of the composition. The comparative scale of figures and nave seem more natural here than in any other van Eyck painting.

These natural proportions were forced upon the painter by the panel's unusual format. The narrow area limited the size of the figures, and he was left with the task of enlivening its upper half with architectural forms alone. This is the reason why he lavished such care on decorative peculiarities like the figured *sgraffito* of the floor and the murals in the Romanesque style.

We can now compare three *Annunciations*—the one in the Ghent altarpiece, the one on the exterior of the little Dresden triptych and this one in St. Petersburg. The Petersburg version fascinates with its imposing, solemnly hieratic architecture as well as its graceful, willowy figures, their robes flowing casually downwards in a rich interplay of lines. The dating of this panel is rendered easier by the fact that the Virgin and the smiling angel are most closely related in type to the heads of the Virgin and St. George in the van der Paele altarpiece. The work is thus likely to take its rightful place in the time around 1434, the high tide of Eyckian production.

The triptych formerly owned by Mr. Schollaert in Louvain, now by Mr. Helleputte in Kessel-Loo 1391, has better credentials as a work of Jan van Eyck than any other unsigned painting (Plates 58, 59). Yet the stylistic analysis that became possible when it was exhibited in Bruges in 1902 (No. 14 in the catalogue) did not dispel the mystery that surrounds it. Weale, with his respect for documents, has never tired in his support for this altarpiece¹⁸, which is able to do so little for us on its own. A number of 16th century witnesses—Lucas de Heere, in his *Ode* (1559), Vaernewyck, especially in his *Spieghel Nederlandscher Audtheydt* (1574)—exalt the triptych as one of Jan van Eyck's masterpieces, painted at the behest of Nicolas van Maelbeke for St. Martin's at Ypres. Its history can be traced with complete continuity. Vaernewyck already noted that the wings were unfinished, and this has led to the conclusion that the master died before he was able to complete it. Van Maelbeke was Provost of St. Martin's from 1429 to 1445.

The centre panel, rounded at the top, shows the Virgin on the right, standing in a lobby with Gothic vaulting open on all sides¹⁹. Holding the child, she bends towards the donor, who kneels at left. This donor, in a surplice of brocade is identified

18. *Loc. cit.*, p. 95, where reproductions will also be found.

19. A copy in reverse is in private ownership at Cologne.

as Provost of St. Martin's by a staff with a figurine of St. Martin. His light beard and black moustache, however, suggest a cleric of the second half of the 16th century. If this is indeed the original, the portrait of the original donor must have been replaced—or, quite conceivably, if it was unfinished, completed—with that of another 1401. On the wings, in two tiers, one above the other, is the Burning Bush (left), with Gideon below, and the Closed Gate of Ezekiel (right), with Aaron below—symbols of virginity, that is. The outside shows a prophet, surmounted by the Virgin, in half-length; and a sibyl, surmounted by three musical angels.

In the execution of this altarpiece there is not a trace of the art of Jan van Eyck. Yet the whole design—the composition and the main outlines of the draughtsmanship, especially in the centre panel—fits the uncommonly well-established tradition. What we have here must be either an original that has been painted over, or a copy dating from the 16th century, the time of the bearded donor. A forgery, skilfully made on the basis of the old descriptions, is out of the question, for a forger able to work so cleverly in the Eyckian style would scarcely have been clumsy enough to put in the anachronistic donor's portrait. The straightforward history of the work, moreover, militates against the supposition of a forgery. Drawings representing the centre panel are preserved in the Albertina at Vienna and at the Germanisches Museum in Nuremberg²⁰ (Plate 59A, B). Stemming directly or indirectly from van Eyck's panel, or from a drawing for it, they afford valuable insight into the original state of the painting. The donor is here shown beardless, although only in sketchy outline. The Albertina drawing, especially, shows the drapery of the Virgin's cloak in a style that is both characteristic and worthy of Jan van Eyck. The elements that give me faith in this composition and the tradition associated with it are the rectilinear approach to the drapery and the comparatively meagre inventiveness of the work, in keeping with a rather late origin, to which must be added the details of perspective, which seem to possess a higher degree of mathematical accuracy than any other Eyck painting. J. Kern has argued persuasively that Jan van Eyck made steady progress in his grasp of the laws of perspective²¹.

20. Reproduced in Weale, pp. 100 and 103.

21. Die Grundzüge der Linear-Perspektivischen Darstellung in der Kunst der Brüder van Eyck, Leipzig, 1904; and Repertorium für Kunsthistorik, Vol. 35, 1912, p. 27 ff.

22. *Les Arts Anciens de Flandre*, Vol. I, p. 60.

23. In his large volume on the van Eycks, where the confusion of judgments is cited.

24. Otto Seck, *Die Charakteristischen Unterschiede der Brüder van Eyck*, Berlin, 1899.

25. Hubert et Jean van Eyck, Brussels, 1910.

26. Sir Martin Conway, *The Van Eycks and Their Followers*, London, 1921.

At the museum in Montauban²² is a portrait of admirable quality, showing a cleric with a tonsure (Plate 60). I have seen it only in mediocre reproduction; but with the reservations made necessary by my ignorance of the original I am inclined to accept this highly individualized portrait, with its masterly modelling, as the work of Jan van Eyck.

Nearly all these unsigned paintings, which I have endeavoured to fit into the order of Jan van Eyck's œuvre, have been on occasion attributed to Hubert by one scholar or another, with varying degrees of conviction. Dvořák and Hulin have developed clear-cut views on Hubert's style, which Dvořák views unfavourably as being weak, while Hulin sees it in a favourable light, as being vigorous. These views may not be right, but one can work with them, one can oppose them. Weale²³, on the other hand, as well as Seck²⁴, Durand-Gréville²⁵ and Conway²⁶, have taken part in the dispute on attribution, without possessing or arriving at coherent views—indeed, they do not even seem to have been aware that what is at issue is the problem of recognizing two masters by their distinct and individual styles.

Eyckian Paintings Known only from Descriptions or in Copies

Certain documents and old writings mention a number of works by Jan van Eyck which no longer survive. Evidence of this kind serves to supplement and complete our impressions.

Beyond question the master painted portraits of his exalted patrons, their consorts and perhaps even their mistresses. There is proof that while he was in Portugal he twice painted Isabella, third spouse of the Burgundian prince. Neither of the originals is known to exist, nor, apparently, even a copy. The painting in the Louvre¹, probably rightly regarded as a portrait of Isabella, shows no sign of the Eyckian touch in its stiff demeanour. A faint trace of it may possibly be sensed in a drawing which Succa, a painter of the 17th century, made after a painting now lost² (Plate 61A).

The second wife, Bonne d'Artois, whom Philip married in 1424 and who died on 17th September 1425 seems also to have been painted by Jan van Eyck. The Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin owns a mediocre portrait of this princess³ (1411), done in the 16th century, which coincides precisely with a drawing in the Arras Codex⁴ (Plates 61B, C). From these one might at least postulate the original existence of a portrait by the master's hand.

It appears unlikely that Jan van Eyck painted Philip's first wife, Michelle de France, whom he married as early as 1409. Succa's drawing⁵, after a lost portrait of her, fails altogether to suggest Jan van Eyck, who indeed entered her husband's service only a few months before the death of the second wife, so that a portrait of Bonne d'Artois may have been among his earliest commissions.

Among the many portraits of Philip, all more or less reminiscent of the style of Rogier van der Weyden and going back to a single original, or at least a very few, none tells us anything about the art of Jan van Eyck. Yet Philip could have scarcely neglected to have his portrait painted by his *varlet de chambre*.

The Arras Codex includes the pale reflection of a painting that portrays Jeanne de Prelle, one of Philip's mistresses and the mother of the *Grand Bâtard*⁶ (Plate 61D). I think I see here a faint trace of the Eyckian style.

No portrait of John of Holland that shows signs of harking back to an Eyck original has become known to me. On the other hand, we do have access to a portrait the master painted of Jacqueline of Bavaria, niece of this prince. G. Glück has shown convincingly⁷, with the aid of a panel in the reserve collection of the Vienna State Gallery (Plate 61E), that a fine silverpoint drawing in the Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt⁸, portrays this lady. A comparison with the Arras Codex confirms this demonstration⁸ (Plate 61F).

The princess was born in 1401 and died as early as 1436. In the drawing she looks rather old, so that it must have been made shortly before her death. G. Glück believes he can read the figures 1432 on the back of the Vienna panel. He expresses himself cautiously, saying only that he sees 'associations with the style of Jan van Eyck' in the drawing. I incline to regard the drawing as an original by Jan's hand.

1. Rubbrecht, *L'Origine du Type Familial de la Maison Habsbourg*, Brussels, 1910, p. 25 (ill.).

2. Illustrated in Weale, p. 180. The painting was in the possession of Denis de Villers.

3. Illustrated in Weale, p. 178; No. 332 of the photographs Giraudon has published of this portrait series.

4. Illustrated in Weale, p. 198. For portraits of this princess, cf. H. Nasse, *Revue Archéologique*, Vol. 1, 1912, p. 406 ff.

5. Photograph No. 366 in the Giraudon series.

6. *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Vervielfältigende Kunst*, 1905, p. 1 f.

7. Illustrated in Weale, p. 180; better in the catalogue of the Frankfurt drawings, as by Rogier van der Weyden.

8. Illustrated in Weale, p. 180; photograph No. 309 in the Giraudon series.

9. *De Beeltenis von Margarethe...Report of the Outeitkundig Genootschap*, 1918, 1919.

10. Glück, *Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte, Festschrift für Wickhoff*, Vienna, 1903, p. 68 f.

11. Pl. 8, in the catalogue of the exhibition.

12. Cf. Rubbrecht, *L'Origine du Type Familial de la Maison Habsbourg*, Brussels, 1910, p. 58 ff.

13. Weale, p. 174.

14. Weale, p. 177.

15. On the subject of world maps in the royal libraries of the time, cf. Kern, *loc. cit.*, p. 26.

J. Six⁹ thinks the drawing a portrait of Margaret of Burgundy, Jacobaea's mother, and ascribes the sheet to Hubert van Eyck.

The portrait of Jacqueline in the Copenhagen gallery (No. 105), described as a copy by Jan Mostaert after Jan van Eyck¹⁰, shows the head turned a different way and with the hands in a different position (Plate 61c). The type represented in the drawing at Frankfurt is to a far greater degree Eyckian.

The Nardus collection in Suresnes, near Paris 1421, owns (or owned) a portrait of a lady that was put on show in Bruges at the Toison d'Or Exhibition of 1907 (No. 17; 45 × 31), described as a portrait of Margaret of York¹¹. It does not very well accord with the better-authenticated portraits of this princess who was born only about 1450¹². If it is indeed Margaret, the original of this panel must have been painted after 1468, the date of her marriage to Charles the Bold. This seems to me unlikely, since the draughtsmanship and lighting—as well as the expression, which, to be sure, we cannot judge with finality from this copy—are thoroughly Eyckian. The original may be considered a possible work by Jan van Eyck.

In Bartolommeo Fazio's *De Viris Illustribus* (1454) three works by Jan van Eyck are described, two at first hand. In the palace of King Alphonsus v of Naples, Fazio admired a winged altarpiece, with an *Annunciation* forming the centre. The donor, Baptista Lomellini, and his wife were depicted on the outside of the shutters, St. John the Baptist and St. Jerome on the inside. The books in St. Jerome's cell, painted with extraordinary fidelity, are expressly mentioned. A Jerome Lomellini did indeed dwell in Bruges in 1392¹³. Perhaps the donor was his son. Alphonsus of Aragon also owned a St. George by Jan van Eyck¹⁴.

Fazio singles out for praise a map of the world Jan van Eyck had executed for Philip the Good, *mundi comprehensio, orbiculari forma*. Not only did it depict the places as such, one could read off their distances from one another on the correct scale. This wholly plausible report throws light on a function of the court painter which seems strange only to the modern view. Art and science were not neatly distinguished in those days. High-born patrons were in the habit of employing the skill and acumen of their painters for tasks requiring accuracy in measurement and calculation, and what they esteemed even more highly than creative powers in our sense was a quick and ever-present knowledge based on observation¹⁵. Cardinal Ottaviano, a member of the Florentine family of that name, owned several paintings by Jan van Eyck, according to Fazio, one of which particularly fascinated this scholar. It showed a group of beautiful women in a bath chamber, emerging from the warm water and drying themselves with linen towels. Only head and breast of one woman were shown uncovered, but a mirror showed her body from the back. The realism of the fire is admired, a perspiring old woman and a drinking dog are specifically mentioned, as is also a rich landscape background with horses, people, hills, houses and castles.

We do not get a very clear picture from this description, but a somewhat similar painting by Jan van Eyck is conveyed to us with greater clarity. Lord Huntingfield, at his home near Birmingham 1431, owns one of those pictures so popular in 17th century Antwerp, showing an art gallery. This is the one of Cornelius van der Geest, and it was painted in 1628 by Willem van Haecht (Plate 62). The paintings that crowd the walls of the hall include several famous ones, like the Frankfurt

portrait by Quentin Massys. One panel is noteworthy for its decidedly Eyckian character. It shows a nude woman side by side with one who is clothed. From several paintings of known dimensions hanging on the same wall, we are able to deduce the measurements with fair accuracy. The format is surprisingly large, some 90 × 60 cm, approximately that of the Arnolfini painting in London, of which this one is reminiscent in several genre aspects—the dog, the wooden slippers which, here as there, enliven the empty floor, the convex mirror, here hung by the window on the left rather than against the back wall, and, finally, the modest and solemn juxtaposition of the two women. The painter who made this copy entered quite sensitively into the spirit of the painting, the style of which must have been foreign to him. Giving us considerably more than the mere shadow of a single picture, he conveys the idea of a whole genre of paintings, to which Cardinal Ottaviano's bath chamber belonged¹⁶. We also learn of a genre piece representing an otter hunt. The Anonimo Morelliano describes this painting on canvas, a foot high, as showing a landscape with several fishermen who have caught an otter while being watched by two tiny spectators. It was in the house of Leonico Tomeo at Padua about 1520¹⁷. The painter is identified as *Gianes de Brugia*.

In the Lampagnano Collection at Milan the same author¹⁸ saw a small painting with figures in half-length—a merchant engaged in accounting work with an assistant. We are familiar with this type of picture, which we believe can be traced back to the workshop of Quentin Massys¹⁹. Of course there may have been an earlier prototype from the time of van Eyck. Unfortunately, the note is equivocal, for the Anonimo added the name of Memling to that of van Eyck, perhaps because both were mentioned to him.

The collection of the Stadholder Margaret included at least two works by Jan van Eyck, in addition to the Arnolfini double portrait—a *Virgin* and a portrait of a lady that went by the name of *La Belle Portugalaise*. The inventory of 1516²⁰ describes the panel with the Virgin as a former possession of Philip of Burgundy, coming from Maillardet and *couverte de satin brouché gris et ayant fermaulx d'argent doré et bordé de velours vert—Faict de la main de Johannes*. Trimmed with silk velvet and gold, this panel hung in the princess' chamber or chapel. Such was the taste with which Philip picked his painter, who lived up to its demands.

Like the Arnolfini painting, *La Belle Portugalaise*, was a gift from Don Diego Flores de Guevara. The portrait was painted on canvas in tempera, like the otter hunt at Padua, and represented *une jeune dame*, dressed in the Portuguese fashion in a red, fur-trimmed robe, and holding in her right hand a scroll on which the image of St. Nicholas was visible. Might this not have been a portrait of the Infanta Isabella? Nicholas was the patron saint of those in peril of shipwreck, and perhaps the painter posed his subject with his picture, in view of the dangerous crossing from Lisbon to the Netherlands.

There are a few works by Jan van Eyck, of which we can get a more or less fair picture from copies that have survived.

The master painted at least one hieratic picture of Jesus, showing the Saviour's countenance in austere full face. Among the known specimens of this composition, (Plate 65) the one in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin, is regarded as the original, although by no means unanimously²¹.

16. A small painting in the Leipzig Municipal Museum, entitled *Magic of Love*, has apparently attracted attention in this connection. This work of a Cologne painter, dating from around 1470, adds nothing to our views of Eyckian genre painting.

17. *The Anonimo*, English edition by Mussi & Williamson, London, 1903, p. 18.

18. *Loc. cit.*, p. 65.

19. Lille Archives, cf. Weale, p. 178.

20. Lille Archives, cf. Weale, p. 177.

21. Voll, *loc. cit.*, p. 100 ff.

22. Illustrated in Weale,
p. 166.

23. Illustrated in Weale,
p. 166.

24. Illustrated in Weale,
p. 168.

25. P. 7 of the catalogue,
1906.

26. Catalogue of the Bruges
museum, p. 18 ff.

27. Durrieu, *Gazette des
Beaux-Arts*, February 1920,
p. 77 ff.

28. A comprehensive recent
discussion, especially of the
portraits in this panel, by
P. Post in *Jahrbuch der Preu-
sischen Kunstsammlungen*, Vol.
33, 1922, p. 120 ff., includes
careful references to the older
literature.

29. Madrazo, *Museo Español
de Antiquedades*, Vol. 4, 1875,
p. 1 ff.

30. In the Chapel of St.
Jerome.

31. Vigée, 1733, Vol. XI,
p. 155.

The Berlin panel (No. 528; 44 × 32)²² comes from the Solly collection and is said to have been in Burgos and Segovia earlier on. The frame bears the inscription : *Johes de eyck me fecit et apleviit anno 1438, 31. January—als ikh kan.*

A painting in the Pinakothek at Munich (No. 99; 50 × 37)²³ is regarded as a copy and lacks the original frame and inscription.

A painting in the museum at Bruges²⁴ (No. 3; 32 × 26) rightly draws an unfavourable judgment from Weale, who declares it to be a copy. It bears the inscription : *Johes de eyck Inventor anno 1440. 30 January—als ikh kan.*

A painting that has recently emerged in private ownership at Newcastle¹⁴⁵¹, England (24 × 16), no longer shows the original inscription. A label on the back of the panel tells of the fate of the lost frame in the following words : 'This head was pain... by John van Eyc... 30. January 1440, his name and the date of the year was written by himself on the frame which (my father) sawd off T. T. West (1784).'

The remaining pictures belonging to this type—for example, that in the Op-polzer collection²⁵ 1461—are clearly copies of later date. It takes no more than the word *Inventor* to rule out the Bruges specimen. Either this means that Jan van Eyck was the 'inventor' of the composition, implying that he did not actually paint this panel ; or the reference is to him as the 'inventor' of oil painting, in which case it could not possibly be by the master himself. The Bruges copy is almost certainly not a copy of the Berlin painting, first, because the date differs (30th January 1440, instead of 31st January 1438) ; and second, because the light comes from the left, while in the Berlin and Munich specimens it comes from the right. On both these points, the English painting agrees with the one at Bruges. Hence we must assume there were two original paintings, one, dating from 1438, lighted from the right ; and another, dating from 1440, lighted from the left¹⁴⁷¹. This does not by any means prove that the specimens in Berlin and England are the originals. One of the arguments put forward, not altogether without justification, against the Berlin panel is the same one with which Weale attacked the Bruges piece²⁶. Van Eyck was in the habit of writing the word *als* with Greek letters. It is held that the copyist failed to comprehend the symbols and made them into something like *AMB*.²⁷ The brushwork is extremely difficult to judge, for the face is sprinkled with numerous spots of retouching. The British panel bears a lofty and austere aspect and may indeed be an original. In any event, it represents the type at the purest.

The so-called *Fountain of Life* in the Prado at Madrid (No. 2188B; 181 × 130) has confronted scholars with many puzzles²⁸ (Plate 64). Reportedly endowed in 1454²⁹ and brought to Madrid from the convent of Parral, near Segovia, it must surely be regarded as a copy of an older painting, and stylistic analysis is little the wiser for it. The original may have been in the Cathedral of Palencia³⁰. Ponz³¹, at least, speaks with enthusiasm of a painting he saw there, the composition of which agrees with the Prado painting.

That composition, as judged by the Prado copy, has much in common, in content and spirit, with the Ghent altarpiece. It is indeed more coherent in effect, since its whole religious symbolism is developed on a single panel. In lofty symmetrical array and phased clarity, the entire work offers a hierarchically organized spectacle in three tiers. The figures on high—the Almighty, the Virgin and the Baptist—are much smaller than the representatives of mankind below, thus investing the con-

text with a spatial consistency lacking in the Ghent altarpiece. Discordant mankind, moreover, contrasts with the harmonious felicity of the angelic beings in the second and the godhead in the third tier. To a greater degree than any other van Eyck painting, the whole composition is imbued with a sense of dramatic life, especially in the group of despairing Jews³², with its bold and vehement patterns of motion. At the centre below is a fountain, artfully chiselled in stone, whose water carries the bread of life, in the form of golden wafers of the Eucharist. On the right stand the exponents of the Old Covenant—a blindfolded priest, turning away with his broken banner, a throng of Jews, startled as though struck by lightning. On the left, the representatives of the Christian Church, or perhaps rather of spiritual and secular power—the Pope, a cardinal, a bishop, the Emperor, a king, then six figures that appear to be portraits, although no clear indication of their estate is given.

As in the case of the Ghent altarpiece, many efforts have been made to identify the personages supposedly portrayed. The man in a fur hat, in particular, kneeling second from the left at the bottom, was once declared to be Hubert van Eyck, on account of his fancied resemblance to the figure so identified in the Ghent altarpiece. Six³³ and Post³⁴, on the other hand, insist that he, like the man on the white charger in the latter work, is Philip the Bold of Burgundy. I personally do not find the resemblance between the two heads striking. Nor can I go along with Post and recognize the young man with the large black head-gear as the supposed Jan van Eyck of the Ghent altarpiece, whom he identifies as Philip the Good. Six believes this is John the Fearless, son of Philip the Bold, while Post identifies the uppermost man in this row as John the Fearless.

Even if these identifications were persuasive, some of the conclusions drawn from them as to the origin of the work would not be justified. It seems quite plausible that Jan or Hubert van Eyck might have introduced their sovereign as the representative of the Christian world. But it does not follow that the Burgundian prince was the donor of this altarpiece. I think the painter would have singled out the duke with far greater emphasis, had he been the donor.

Should Post have hit the mark with his portrait identification, we would have to agree with his very early dating of the *Fountain of Life*—around 1420. Philip ascended to power in 1419, at the age of 23, and he looks very young here. Post is convinced that a study of the dress confirms his dating. One fact hard to reconcile with his line of reasoning is that the tonsured head of a cleric emerges between his supposed Philip the Good and his supposed John the Fearless. The supposed Philip the Bold wears a very curious adornment about his neck—a twig stripped of leaves. Perhaps this emblem will in time lift the mystery of this figure³⁵.

Judging by the style, I am inclined rather to assume a date around 1430, which would fit Justi's conjecture that the work may be associated with Jan van Eyck's journey to Portugal and that John II of Castile may have been the donor³⁶. This hypothesis would explain the conspicuous circumstance that the original and the copy (according to Ponz, several copies) were to be found in Spain, while no copy existed in the Netherlands.

There has been much ado of late about a *Christ Carrying the Cross* in the Budapest museum (No. 681; 98 × 130), considered an ancient copy of an original painting related to the paintings in the early Eyckian style³⁷ (Plate 65 A).

32. A drawing in Lützschena [48] with a similar representation, published by Becker, *Handzeichnungen aus Privatbesitz*, Leipzig, 1922, Pl. I. (Plate 65 B)

33. *Revue Archéologique*, Vol. 18, 1911, p. 401 ff.

34. *Loc. cit.*, p. 122.

35. Some efforts at an interpretation will be found in a lecture by Hulin, in the *Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire de Gand*, 1911, No. I.

36. *Miscellaneen aus Drei Jahrhunderten Spanischen Kunstlebens*, Vol. I, p. 293 ff.

37. H. Zimmermann, *Amtliche Berichte aus den Königlichen Museen*, Berlin, Vol. 39,

p. 15 ff.; F. Winkler, *ibidem*, p. 29 ff. and *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, Vol. 37, p. 295; Dvořák, *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, Vol. 39, p. 66 ff. (ill.). Zimmermann and Dvořák challenge the Eyckian authorship of this original, as well as of the entire group of miniatures and panels, seeking to distinguish a typically Dutch art style—as though the brothers van Eyck were not entitled to characteristics that are typically Dutch.

38. Reproduction (No. 45) in Publication No. 7 of the Prestel Society.

39. Reproduction in *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, Vol. 37, p. 293.

A good metalpoint drawing after part of this composition in the Brunswick Kupferstichkabinett shows a mounted group³⁸ (Plate 65 c). It is probably based on the original—in any event, not on the Budapest copy. The composition itself is richly imaginative, a significant work of stature, created about 1420, as proved by the style of dress. It is thoroughly ‘Eyckian’ and must have been known to the mediocre miniaturist to whom it fell to do the *Christ Carrying the Cross* in the Turin-Milan Prayer Book³⁹, for he borrowed several of his figures from it.

Another *Christ Carrying the Cross* was sold to America from the Wilczek collection, through F. Kleinberger 1491. A tall panel, it departs widely in style and essential features from the Budapest composition, but it does contain some elements—notably the town view—which demonstrate that this artist too knew the original picture.

Although the mediocre execution mutes its eloquence, the Budapest painting, in its structure, landscape forms, proportions of figures and background, and genre features, is among the most important monuments of the early Eyckian style.

Drawings in the Eyckian Style

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Drawings by early Netherlandish artists make up a chapter that is as daunting as it is meagre, and they are, for the most part, neglected altogether. When one critically examines the surviving sheets that show types, motives, compositions and forms in the early Netherlandish manner, one usually finds them to be copies. Painters' apprentices were in the habit of practising by drawing from drawings. Compositions were recorded and passed on—on a vast scale in the Netherlands—entirely by means of drawings. Paintings usually left the painter's workshop soon after they were finished and were rarely copied; but the preliminary drawings—and drawings made from the finished works—were retained, as a useful store from which patrons could make their selections. Apprentices used them in their studies, the painter's actual assistants used them as a guide, and copies of the copies wandered from one workshop to another. Only a tiny fraction of these materials has survived, with mediocre copies in the preponderant majority. And we come upon this unhappy disproportion, whenever we search for drawings by the old masters of the 15th century.

In respect of drawings in the Eyckian style, we have already had occasion to mention several that are associated with various paintings. Drawings of several well-known panel compositions exist, for example of the angel of the *Annunciation* in the Ghent altarpiece (Plate 67 E) and of the Antwerp *Virgin* in the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett¹ (Plate 67 D).

These pen-and-ink drawings are rather on the vigorous side. There is a good silverpoint drawing of the centrepiece of the van Maelbeke altarpiece in the Albertina² which has been occasionally ascribed to Petrus Christus (Plate 59 A). Another silverpoint drawing, agreeing with the Albertina specimen in every detail, is in the Germanisches Museum, Nuremberg³ (Plate 59 B).

We have a number of pen-and-ink drawings of the *Virgin in the Church*, for example in the collection of Count L. Paar⁴, No. 326 in the Vienna auction of 1886, and in the former collection of Sir Charles J. Robinson.

In none of these cases is the decision difficult. No one would even remotely believe that any of them are designs, studies or preliminary drawings by the hand of Jan van Eyck. By and large, all pen-and-ink drawings should be regarded with suspicion. There is scarcely one by any of the major 15th century Netherlandish masters that has been convincingly authenticated. Time and again, the quest for original drawings has been rewarded only with frustration and disappointment, with a result all too common in such researches—an ill-tempered and pusillanimous prejudice against acknowledging even the few originals that have indeed survived. Almost every early Netherlandish drawing is declared a copy, no sooner than it comes to light. Under the guise of critical caution, this utter lack of judgment has questioned even the magnificent drawing for the Albergati portrait (see p. 57, above). This Dresden drawing is by far the finest of the early Netherlandish period, and it offers us a standard by which we may judge other sheets—a dangerous standard, in my

1. Illustrated in Weale, p. 52 and 92.

2. Illustrated in Weale, p. 100, and Albertina Publication (Schönbrunner-Meder) No. 847.

3. Illustrated in Weale, p. 1021.

4. Illustrated in Weale, p. 134.

5. Reproduced in *Handzeichnungen Alter Meister im Städelischen Kunstinstitut*, xvi, 7. Cf. Weale, p. 24, where the subject, on little more than a hunch, is identified as *Jaghermeester Henry van Eyck*, whom documents show to have been in the service of John of Bavaria at the same time as Jan van Eyck.

6. Reproduced in *Handzeichnungen Alter Meister im Städelischen Kunstinstitut*, xvi, 6.

7. Illustrated in Weale, p. 206.

8. Reproduced as No. 12 in Publication No. 9 of the Vasari Society. The drawing was formerly in the Galichon collection. Cf. *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Vol. 22, 1867, p. 84.

9. Moes, *Handzeichnungen im Kupferstichkabinett zu Amsterdam*, Plate 32.

10. Reproduced in the second issue on the Berlin drawings, xiv G., published by Grote.

11. Photograph by Giraudon, reproduced by Winkler, *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, Vol. 37, 1916, p. 296.

12. Two of the sequence of twelve are reproduced in Meder, *Handzeichnungen in der Albertina*, new series, Plates 31, 32. Two others are in the *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, loc. cit.,

view. Compared with it, no other drawings can fully satisfy. Closest to it in quality stands the *Man with a Falcon*, in the Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt⁵ (Plate 66). He wears a great fur hat, a head covering that carries a hint of the *Man with the Pinks* in Berlin. Severely modelled in the essential portions, while robe and background are barely sketched, this is by any standard a silverpoint drawing of outstanding quality; and I am inclined to view it as a work from the hand of Jan van Eyck, of the period around 1425.

The *Portrait of a Lady*, in Frankfurt⁶, has been identified as Jacqueline of Bavaria by G. Glück, correctly, in my view (Plate 67A). It is not at all a counterpart to the Falconer—the sheet and scale are substantially smaller—but neither is it inferior in quality, and it may very well be an original drawing.

Both drawings should, at the very least, be judged from the excellent photogravure reproductions in the Frankfurt publication (to see the originals would, of course, be even better), rather than from inferior reproductions, such as those in the Albertina publication (Schönbrunner-Meder, Nos. 388 and 397).

According well, in expression and use of light, with Jan van Eyck's painted portraits, and clearly dating from his time, judging by the head covering, is a silverpoint drawing of a man in half-length in the Louvre⁷ (Plate 67B) 1501. It is in the running as an original by the master, although the draughtsmanship is looser and less firm than in the matchless Dresden piece.

I am still less certain in my judgment of a portrait of a man with a head covering something like a turban, which came to the British Museum with the Malcolm collection⁸ (Plate 67C). A bit on the stiff and sharp side, with a curious harshness in the modelling of the face, yet not without a certain fascination in its expression of aloofness, this sheet would find its place in the Eyckian œuvre only as an early work.

Two small drawings, each showing an *Adoration of the Magi*—one in the Rijks-prentenkabinet at Amsterdam⁹ (Plate 68B), the other in Berlin¹⁰ (Plate 68C)—coincide in style with the Turin-Milan miniatures, more specifically Hulin's 'Hand G', which I endeavoured to explain as early works by Jan van Eyck. The delicate silverpoint drawing in Amsterdam, especially, with its flowing and archaic draughtsmanship, may be by the hand of the miniaturist. The Berlin sheet, shaded very closely with the pen, displays the stamp of this personality less plainly.

Whatever else it may be, the silverpoint drawing of St. Christopher in the Louvre is a work of sublime quality by a master, dating from the time around 1420¹¹ (Plate 68A). Winkler rightly notes its Eyckian character, but, yielding to the widespread scepticism about Netherlandish drawings, describes it as a copy. The fabrics of the robe, fluttering wildly in the wind, are lovingly depicted with astonishing depth and detail. An Eyckian sense of the nature of matter informs the texture of rock and hair. I am confident that Jan van Eyck drew this extraordinary sheet, at an early stage in his career.

The *Apostles* in the Albertina¹² are much more readily recognizable by their Eyckian style, but they are drawings of lesser worth and certainly copies (Plate 69). The figures are cleanly drawn with care and intelligence, although with rather shaky strokes of the pen, and they carry much of Jan van Eyck's resourcefulness, especially in the rich and imaginative attire. In my view, the originals must have been done shortly before 1430.

In the discussion of the Budapest painting, *Christ Carrying the Cross* (p. 71, above), it was noted that the silverpoint drawing in Brunswick, showing a mounted train from this composition, is a copy.

In respect of the silverpoint of the *Annunciation* in Wolfenbüttel, I am convinced that Hildegard Zimmermann, who discovered and published this sheet¹³, is correct in accepting it (Plate 70 A). My impression is in agreement with hers: This is an original by Jan van Eyck from about 1428, after the *Virgin in the Church* and perhaps contemporary with the original of the *Fountain of Life* in Madrid.

I briefly mention some drawings that are more on the outer fringes than those already noted:

Portrait of a Goldsmith, holding a ring in his right hand, in the Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin¹⁴ (Plate 71 A). This is from the J.W. collection, No. 244 in the Munich auction of 1897. It has been heavily worked over and tampered with, hence is hard to judge. The basic approach, however, is close to Jan van Eyck's painted portraits.

Portrait of a Man, in half-length, in the Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin¹⁵ (Plate 71 B). A well-preserved silverpoint drawing, from the time and in the style of Jan van Eyck, but somewhat wooden and dead. Probably the work of a disciple, but not a copy.

Portrait of a Lady, in the museum at Rotterdam (Plate 71 C). Delicate in expression, certainly an original, but by a somewhat mediocre hand.

Coronation of the Virgin, in the Albertina¹⁶ (Plate 70 B). A fine crayon drawing, altogether Eyckian in composition and style of drapery. Probably the work of a pupil.

Jael and Sisera, in the Kupferstichkabinett, Brunswick¹⁷ (Plate 71 D). This excellent sheet is dated with reasonable accuracy in the publication (about 1425-1511) but has been erroneously associated with the Master of Flémalle by Winkler¹⁸. The author must be sought in the immediate vicinity of Jan van Eyck and Petrus Christus.

A sheet in Turin, with two excellently drawn female heads, has been quite appropriately captioned 'Studio of Jan van Eyck,' in a photograph by Anderson (No. 9803) (Plate 70 C).

Once the veto has been overcome, Jan van Eyck's draughtsmanship may be studied in at least six examples. Careful scrutiny of the small store of early Netherlandish drawings may yet wrest many a piece from stereotyped bias and scepticism.

pp. 299 and 300. Prestel give engraved reproductions of all 12 in their publication on the Praun Collection. A single apostle of similar kind, done with a delicate brush, has gone to the Morgan Library with the Fairfax Murray Collection (No. 225 in the catalogue of the collection) (Plate 68 D).

13. *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, Vol. 36, 1915, p. 215 ff.

14. Reproduced in Weale, p. 64.

15. Second Grote publication on the Berlin drawings, vii D.

16. Schönbrunner-Meder, No. 708.

17. No. 46 in Prestel publication No. 7.

18. *Der Meister von Flémalle*, p. 23 ff.

Jan van Eyck—His Work and His Character

My own image of Jan van Eyck—his work, his growth, his personality—rests on the premise that the pages of the Turin-Milan Prayer Book, more particularly those ascribed by others to Hubert van Eyck, bear to some extent the imprint of Jan's hand. Book illumination was, after all, presumably his point of departure as an artist.

An hypothesis is something other than conjecture. It is a helpful construction or an experiment. In the present case, I propose to see how the whole edifice looks, if I erect it on the foundation of my supposition. Perhaps the totality will be tenable, enlisting support by its organic cogency and thus justifying my premise after the fact. At worst, I may be granted indulgence for a fictitious theory, a kind of mythology, if you will, that nevertheless takes into account all the forces from which Netherlandish painting took new life between 1410 and 1430.

Jan van Eyck was probably born about 1390. Tradition affected him most strongly from the direction of the art of illumination, favoured by princes of French blood. By 1400, this art had virtually reached the level that marked his point of departure. Among the artists of Lower Germany employed by the ruling families of the Netherlands, with their mutual bonds of kinship, Jan distinguished himself in early youth. In 1416, William of Bavaria entrusted to him the Prayer Book he had inherited from the Duc de Berry, and its pages were now illuminated with scenes instinct with a sense of light, air, space and pictorial coherence—for the first time, to our eyes. The youthful master was stirred to the depths of his lyrical soul. With the inspired, unconscious assurance of the sleepwalker, he hit upon the secret of dramatic expression in the mood of landscape—but in the representational elements—physical types, drapery, portraiture—he had not yet cast free of school and tradition. Upon Count William's death in 1417, his brother and successor, John the Merciless, enlisted the painter's services and, between 1422 and 1425, kept him busy with commissions at the Palace of The Hague, of the nature of which we have no idea. It was at this time that panels came into being, like the lost *Adoration*, with the wings preserved in St. Petersburg. Employing new techniques, Jan van Eyck applied the style of miniature painting to the art of the altarpiece.

In a deeper sense, the 'invention of oil painting'—which to contemporaries seemed the cause of the extraordinary achievement, indeed, the accomplishment itself—was no more than its consequence; for the new way of looking at things could no longer subsist on the old methods and had to give rise to new techniques. The master was aided in this break with tradition by the fact that he, working in the service of his sovereign, was exempt from the constraint of the guilds. The painstaking new method of painting—or rather enamelling—with quick-drying pigments in many layers, producing a smaltlike surface of unprecedented luminosity, was economically rewarding; for princely patrons valued books and pictures, as they did gold and jewels, and esteemed especially precious work that was concentrated into the smallest space.

A determining influence in the art of Jan van Eyck was his contact with a courtly culture that stemmed from French soil and appreciated manageable and tangible luxury. The attention of painters was fixed on those things that exemplified power and sovereignty—silk, brocade and other precious fabrics on which much labour had been lavished, furs and jewellery of gold and precious stones. Among craftsmen employed at court, the goldsmiths were closest to the painters. Jan van Eyck kept in well with that craft. Goldsmiths are among the men he portrayed, beside princes, Italian merchants, high court officials and prelates of exalted rank. Indeed, he was himself a goldsmith—although only in the same sense that he was an architect. The diadems in his paintings are creations of the goldsmith's craft, just as the buildings in them manifest the imagination of an architect.

Directly upon the death of John of Bavaria in 1425, the mightiest prince of the Netherlands, Philip the Good, secured the services of Jan van Eyck, never to let him go again. What commended the painter to this lord was not merely his skill as an artist, but his shrewdness, his tact, and his whole approach to life. Philip availed himself of this *varlet de chambre* for secret missions. The painter was repeatedly dispatched on journeys and even seconded to the embassy that travelled to Portugal in 1428 to sue for a bride. Continual life at court did not accord with Jan van Eyck's inclinations. He sought to secure a degree of independence for himself, settled in Bruges, where he established a family, and remained true to this town until his death—except when the Burgundian prince, with whom he continued to maintain cordial relations, summoned him hither and yon.

Between 1426 and 1432 Jan was busy on the Ghent altarpiece, which his brother, who died on 18th September 1426, had begun. True, this work was interrupted for more than a year by the trip to Portugal—unless, of course, it did not even begin until 1430. In any event, however far the work may have advanced under Hubert's hands, Jan faced the task of giving flesh to a skeleton not of his making. The scale of the work was unfamiliar to him, and its old-fashioned polyptych organization stuck in his craw, for his ambition was directed towards unity of illusion. Even under the most searching scrutiny, the surface of the Ghent altarpiece reveals no dividing lines. At least, this may be said of the shutters, with have been painstakingly studied, if not of the central pieces, which have never been examined in detail in the gloom of the chapel. The composition is more than multifarious enough and departs from Jan van Eyck's style in a number of particulars. A few of the musical angels startle us with their almost acid sharpness, which may be due, not merely to the large scale but the participation of his brother Hubert.

As a court portraitist—Jan van Eyck's most serious duty—his powers had been elicited and enhanced by the observation of the individual human countenance. Just so, when confronted with the task of depicting lifesize nudes, the master stuck resolutely to his models. His keen eye encompassed the way the human body is built. This, to be sure, was no particular concern of the miniaturist; but Jan van Eyck made it his task, from the outside in. Indeed, his entire conquest of reality proceeded from the surface in depth—whether it was landscape (which came first), or light, or the total pictorial—'picturesque'—context, with its rocks and foliage, its metals and fabrics, and then the individual human being and his individual body. His painter's knowledge fed on the experiences of his eyes. His observation is

sensual, born of joyous amazement, all-embracing and never satisfied. He knows fabrics like the weaver, from whose loom they have flowed, buildings like an architect, the earth like a geographer, plants like a botanist. His contemporaries esteemed this knowledge more highly than they did the imagination in which it was rooted. They viewed the painter, whose outstanding merit was that he had 'invented the art of oil painting,' more in the light of a sage, a warlock invested with mysterious power and knowledge. The demands by his high-born patrons often extended into the areas of calculation and measurement, such as the world map Philip charged him with executing. This contemporary judgment may have been wholly out of keeping with the painter's creative genius, indeed, may have debased it to some extent, yet the opinion of his fellows could scarcely have failed to affect the painter in some degree, their particular mode of acknowledgment serving to enhance those of his powers that met with recognition.

With the years, Jan van Eyck's artistic skill ripened into thoughtful serenity. His compositions gained in simplicity and tranquillity, in moderation and economy, in dignified representation. In the beginning his approach to the shaping of space was almost instinctive, but in time it edged towards the very limits of mathematically calculated perspective. Slowly the dramatic vividness, robust opulence and natural idiom of his youth ebbed away.

What was created was nothing more nor less than panel painting as such—taking the term in the meaning now given to it—the image absolute, the reflection of reality that comes from taking part in reality, whatever its spiritual content or religious meaning. True, the themes Jan van Eyck represented were those his predecessors had treated before him; but his landscapes and interiors are valid in their own right, even without whatever narrative content the painting may have—like a song that loses nothing in value and effect when the words are omitted. His genius boldly transcended everything that had ever been expected of painting, in its distillation of the visible world. Indeed, he virtually created three important branches of painting—genre, landscape and still life.

In much of his achievement, Jan van Eyck was inseparable from his age rather than an individual exception—in his new relationships towards sensory reality, his habit of observing all phenomena without distinction, his unselective and unprejudiced faith in what his eyes saw. Signs of the ferment that was to lead to the period of invention and discovery were already dimly in view. What is utterly individual is the resolute originality with which the new approach to the visible world was creatively applied to the art of painting; and we find it hard to credit this achievement to the work of two brothers, each responsible for distinct parts of it.

Mankind has never been blind. Everywhere and in all ages, creative artists have sought to imitate the visible world in terms of illusion. Jan van Eyck's achievement was to create illusion of a kind never seen before—we should not eschew the statement for fear that it be banal; and if his skill was great, it was because his will was even greater. Mediaeval art too drew its power and impetus from an urge for verisimilitude, but the painters were held back, handicapped and diverted by their mission of making visible the divine, which ecclesiastical doctrine austere insisted must be of the purest spirituality. True, such exemplification was possible only by way of imitation of something actually seen, yet the challenge itself militated against

individualization. Anything represented with sharpness and precision serves to project the supernatural down to the stage of the adventitious and unredeemed.

Jan van Eyck, with a degree of intellectual autonomy the modern observer is scarcely able to fathom, cast off the shackles of his craft. None of his contemporaries—not even the master himself—grasped the consequences of this upheaval, among which loomed the profanation and break-down of Christian iconography, although, by the law of inertia, this was not to come for some time.

Jan van Eyck was a faithful son of the Church, and his serene nature was never ruffled by any conflict between his joy in the world of the senses and his task of creating types for his fellow faithful. He never caught on that a figure individualized in space, bearing all the marks of mortality, was ill-suited to serve as a symbol of the eternal that knows neither time nor space. He naïvely thought he was dodging this conflict, when he distinguished divinity above royalty by means of crowns, jewels and precious robes. Even his propensity for inscribed texts, for singing God's praises in words, is woven into his desire to honour and exalt the unearthly that appears before our eyes in human form, irradiated by our sun, inhabiting some secular interior. Rather than give form to symbols, he put them into words.

Departing from the ordered beauty that was art's traditional homage to God, Jan van Eyck more than made up for it in a quality of full-blooded grace that came straight from the heart. The Virgins, in particular, and the sacred women he created in his later years enchant us with their graceful movements and sweet expressions—although their hands are now more suited to grasping and holding, and no longer the slender and lissom lily stems of yore.

Van Eyck never tired of discerning new detail. Unrelieved surfaces and straight lines were anathema to him. No doubt his apprenticeship in the art of illumination was in part responsible for this penchant for dividing and subdividing and arborizing. He knew the patch of brocade he was painting in an inch-wide spot consisted of a hundred threads and he knew equally well that the impression of its texture stemmed from this complexity. A miniaturist, he was committed to executing 'close-ups' on a tiny scale. The sharp vision and the equally pointed brush that joined in this innocent virtuosity were beyond question encouraged by the applause and amazement of the master's contemporaries.

The ground is never mere smooth surface. It is patterned in tile, or grown into rich lawn or fissured rock. Rocks themselves are not shapeless masses, but stratified, slaty, laminated. Nothing large but is the sum of many parts. Everywhere the painter offers impediments to light—cracks, furrows, holes—creating a complex alternation of light and dark that renders tangible the specific essence and peculiar character of each material. It is in this discontinuous warp and woof of form in motion that he traces the moving force, be it of nature or the hand of man. He senses that organic life is made up of infinitely small parts and infinitely many. The begetting potency of life is conveyed to him in a myriad glimpses. This is where he finds his 'beauty.'

As a Gothic—and Germanic—man and as a painter, he found the wealth of burgeoning life a challenge to tireless imitation. Yielding fervently to what he saw, he escaped the pitfall of acidulous pedantry and proceeded from the special to the general. The sun was fixed in its place beyond the painting and, by irradiating each

individual thing in it, awakening, yea, creating it, it wove the parts of the picture into a whole. For a painter of his time, Jan van Eyck invested his work with a coherence of unprecedented firmness, despite his superlatively precise and acute representation of each detail. This was because he never lost sight of where the light came from, joining all things to a single point, and, therefore, with one another.

So deep was his grasp of lighting that he went far beyond three-dimensional modelling—practised with consummate mastery in his portrait heads—and incorporated the very radiant gold of light itself into his pictorial context, as an element of both form and colour. His highlights and deep shadows do not subserve the mood of clarity as such—but do enhance the sense of ‘picturesque’ richness. This is true of his reflected light as well. The suffused margins on the shadowed side do not deepen the modelling as such. In the Berlin *Virgin*, for example, the light shines through the tall windows, painting bright patches on floor and walls of the church. Jan van Eyck seems to follow the light beams on their way, and by so doing he expands the spaces they traverse and discovers the relativity of form and the relativity of colour.

Every object the master seeks to characterize with his impartial sense of configuration and consistency stands in its proper place, in the circumstances that prevail. It looks large or small, in keeping with its location in space, fully exposed or foreshortened, overlapped or partly hidden, turning one aspect or another towards the limner. Therein lies the relativity of form—appearance depends on the coordinates, on the incidence of light, on the character of the stuff and the way it behaves under illumination. As for the relativity of colour, it depends on the manner in which light alters the inherent hue, the local colour. Place and texture make things dyed with the same pigment look different, not merely in terms of brightness, but by the nature of the colour itself. A board painted in blue presents a different colour from velvet dyed with the same pigment. Blue sky is not like blue water. When clear air lies between ourselves and the object, it is not the same as when we look through blue into blue—immersing our eye, say, into the sparkling depths of a sapphire, or regarding a fabric in which cunningly woven threads give rise to some coloured pattern or other.

Sense is opposed to essence. The crucial element in art is whether the painter is involved with the absolute—those aspects that have nothing to do with the exigencies of light and place—or with the adventitious phenomena of form and colour, in which things are seen as unique in a given situation. The entire evolution of painting might well be conceived of in terms of the progress from the former approach to the latter. Along this road, the painter departs, more or less, from the sculptor. Every great painter has traversed a distance on it. Jan van Eyck made giant strides on it—to the critical point where his lively and alert quest for encompassing existence was still compatible with his spell-bound surrender to the way things looked.

However narrowly the term is drawn, Jan van Eyck was a painter, the ancestor of the Netherlandish painters of the 17th century, for he did enter the precincts of ‘chiaroscuro.’ True, his chiaroscuro was at odds with his deep compulsion to present in complete clarity and detail the proper form, hue and character of the things he painted. Yet it is the most eloquent witness for the originality of his talent, the

quality that lifts him farthest above his time. His overdark depths hint at a lavish wealth of forms not yet released into the fulness of light, as in a cornucopia, from which ever-changing shapes well, as soon as the light awakens them from their crowded limbo.

80

In his portraits he was obliged to depict the individual lineaments in point with the utmost verisimilitude. And indeed, on the lighted side he set the pure contour against a dark ground, with the draughtsman's skill of profile. Yet on the shaded side he let billows of darkness surge over the body's shores.

Jan van Eyck loved fabrics that lent themselves to chiaroscuro—deep and even black brocades from which shine threads of gold, and the dark blonde hair of women that resembles spun gold.

His new-found sensitivity to the values of light and colour invested his paintings with an air of sparkling animation. He loved warm shades, because to him the golden sun was the awakener of all that was visible. He loved dark hues, because he had an instinct for the relativity of colour and the haze of intervening air. He loved assertive and saturated tints, because he craved splendour and glory by which to exalt his God. He packed a whole bundle of qualities into his *coloris*, creating a guarded, harmonious, colourful semi-chiaroscuro that glows from the depths and the distances.

The tension of harmonizing disparate things limbered his hands and gave them incredible skill. It opened the door to the chemistry of pigments, leading to the experiments that gave rise to what was celebrated as the 'invention of oil painting.'

With the years, his interest in story-telling, in the expression of emotion slackened. He was more and more concerned with matching his powers against things that held still before his gaze. His art turned towards still life, towards the grouping of figures like statuary. His agitated and dramatic compositions—like the *Crucifixion* in St. Petersburg and the *Three Women* in the Cook collection—are comparatively early works, while the curiously immobile *St. Francis* belongs to his late period.

Jan's mind was lucid and his nature wholesomely of this earth. Undoubtedly these qualities were enhanced by his travels, with the opportunity to see new sights and display initiative, and further strengthened by his intercourse with swash-buckling princes and venturesome merchants. In any event, the perpetual feast spread out before his eyes never daunted him. He did not suffer life, he mastered it, as he did his art. His Almighty is not ecclesiastically austere and judicial in expression, but merciful, pervaded with a lofty dignity that inspires love. His devotional moods are grave and worshipful, but never oppressive or sentimental. His buildings soar from the ground, and their chambers are no strangers to happiness. His countrysides teem with life, and their flora rejoices in the bloom of summer. This master was never tormented and beset with the solitude of genius. His creative work was never marked by outward struggle or inner conflict. His innate powers made him reach for the sublime, but he never elbowed his way up. With all the wisdom he attained, he kept the free and innocent soul of a child.

Petrus Christus

81

Aesthetes and psychologists have oft endeavoured to define the essential difference between genius and talent ; and as we turn from a truly creative master to one who may be described as competent, we may well ponder the distinction. Works of genius have an inherent inexorability that is sublimer than in works of talent, and, in any event, different. There is a difference too in the way an art connoisseur confronts genius, as against talent. He is confident of his ability to recognize works by a master of genius instantly, for they are all of a piece, steeped in originality, neither imitative nor capable of being imitated. In fact, the full scope of a genius transcends the scope of his knowledge. Talent too has many aspects, may change its style, dissemble, so to speak—but reason can always follow and comprehend its work. In consequence, the connoisseur, when dealing with genius, does best when he adopts the guise of a sensitive disciple who believes in miracles ; whereas in the case of talent he goes farthest in the rôle of crafty detective.

Petrus Christus, or Petrus Christi, came from Baerle, a town about halfway between Turnhout and Limburg, in what is today Holland, but close to the Belgian border. Settling in Bruges, he acquired his master's patent there on 6th July 1444. Prior to 1442, he had probably been an apprentice or journeyman in Jan van Eyck's workshop. At least, comparing his work with that of Jan, the most plausible explanation is that Petrus learned his craft from Jan. He must have watched the master paint, for he remained completely in Jan's thrall. Probably he inherited or otherwise acquired drawings from Jan's workshop. His exploitation of Eyckian achievements would be otherwise hard to understand.

In the inscriptions, with which Pieter of Baerle identified his paintings, after the model of Jan van Eyck, he called himself Christi— \overline{XPI} —introducing his odd name as that of his father. In documents, however, his name is given as Christus ; and his father's name was Petrus Christus too. An illegitimate son of his, the miniaturist Sebastian Christus, was admitted as a full master at Bruges on 13th March 1476, and Sebastian's son, again named Petrus Christus, acquired the same degree in 1501¹.

Guicciardini² mentions *Pietro Crista* in fourth place after the van Eycks. Vasari mentions the name as well, but not van Mander. For the period from 1446 to 1457 (?), we can follow the work of this master in paintings with dated inscriptions. We do not learn very much about him from documents or references to him in the older books. In 1454, for the Count d'Étampes, he made three copies of a *Virgin*, a painting that had been brought to Cambrai cathedral from Rome in 1451. It was probably a panel in the Byzantine style, believed to be the work of St. Luke. In 1463, together with a certain Pieter de Nachtegale, he painted a large picture, showing the Tree of Jesse, that was carried in the annual procession of the Confraternity of the Holy Blood. Petrus died between 13th March 1472 and November 1473. Lorenzo de' Medici owned a *Portrait of a French Lady*, listed in an inventory of 1492 as the work of *Pietro Cresti da Bruggia*³.

1. All these data must be credited to W. H. James Weale, whose researches in the archives at Bruges have provided a firm documentary foundation, set down in *Peintres Brugeois, Les Christus*, Bruges, 1909. Cf. W. Cohen's article on Petrus Christus in Thieme's *Künstlerlexikon*, which includes careful references.

2. See p. 19, above.

3. E. Müntz, *Les Collections des Medicis au xve Siècle*, Paris, 188, p. 79.

In a letter of 1524 to Marc Antonio Michiel, Pietro Summonte mentions a small painting in the possession of Sr. Sannazaro : *Christo in majestate, opera bona di mano di un chiamato Petrus Christi, pictor famoso in Fiandra piu antiquo di Joannes et di Rogiero*⁴.

Some time before 1462 Pieter and his wife became members of the Brotherhood of the Virgin of the Dry Tree (*Arbre Sec*).

Attention was drawn some time ago to a documentary entry according to which a painter named *Piero di Burges* worked at the Court of Milan in 1457, together with Zanetto Bugati and Antonello⁵, and sweeping conclusions have been drawn from this clue⁶. It is hazardous to place too much faith in it, since it can probably never be proved that this Piero was indeed Petrus Christus, and Burges Bruges. It is, of course, tempting to imagine that Antonello da Messina actually met the disciple of van Eyck in Milan.

I shall now list and discuss the paintings of Petrus Christus, which almost alone represent what survives of the art of Bruges, from the death of Jan van Eyck to the time Memling began his work. First come the signed and dated works, followed by those that by stylistic analysis belong with them.

Portrait of Edward Grymeston, in the possession of the Earl of Verulam at Corhambury (36 × 27) (Plate 73). It has been repeatedly exhibited in London, among other times in 1892, at the Burlington Club (No. 12, reproduction No. 17 in the catalogue). It is inscribed on the back : XPI., ME FECIT A 1446 PETRYS.

The identity of the subject is established by the coat of arms. Henry VI had sent this Englishman to the Netherlands in 1445, to negotiate a trade agreement. His presence in Brussels is a matter of record as late as 12th July 1446. He probably stopped at Bruges on the way home, to have his portrait painted by Petrus Christus. Weale's surmise that the *Portrait of a Lady* in Berlin (see p. 84 further on) represents Grymeston's wife is without the slightest foundation⁷. The dimensions of the two panels are quite different, their compositions do not harmonize—nor is it likely that the English lady accompanied her husband to the Netherlands.

4. *Repertorium für Kunsts-
schaft*, Vol. 30, 1907, p. 148.

5. Malaguzzi Valeri, *Pittori
Lombardi del XIV*, Milan, 1902,
pp. 89, 217.

6. Von Mandach, *Monuments
et Mémoires*, Piot, 1909,
pp. 196 ff.

7. *Loc. cit.*, p. 7.

8. Reproduction on p. 14 of
Museum, Vol. 1, Barcelona,
1911.

*Portrait of a Carthusian*⁸, with a halo perhaps added later, once in the possession of Viceroy Don Ramon de Oms in Majorca, now in the collection of the Marquis de Dos Aguas, Valencia (Plate 74). Signed and dated 1466 1521.

I have not seen the original, but judging from the reproduction it is an excellent work, very similar to the Grymeston portrait of the same date. Jan van Eyck's method of positioning and lighting the head has been intelligently employed here.

St. Eloy (98 × 85), Lehman Collection, New York, formerly in the collection of Baron Albert Oppenheim, Cologne (Plate 75). At the Berlin auction in 1914, it was bought for Herr Busch of Mainz (No. 6). It was shown at the Bruges exhibition of 1902 (No. 17). The panel itself carries this inscription at the bottom : petr xpi me · fecit · a · 1449. At the end of the inscription stands a kind of merchant's mark in the shape of a heart.

The painting shows three figures in half-length in the shop of a goldsmith, and it makes a genrelike impression. The goldsmith sits behind a window sill extended

to form a table, a pair of jeweller's scales in one hand, a ring in the other. Only his halo suggests that the painting deals with legend. To the left stands a bridal couple, richly dressed in the fashion of 1450. The young woman is reaching for the ring, while the bridegroom has his arm around her shoulder. On the right is a display of examples of the goldsmith's craft. Weale suggests the scene is based on the legend of St. Godeberta, whom St. Eloy betrothed to Christ in the presence of King Lothar⁹. Woltmann has entered a justified demur¹⁰: In contrast to St. Eloy, the woman is not identified by a halo as a saint, while the young man figuring as her bridegroom could be neither Christ, nor, as proposed by Weale, King Lothar. Woltmann thinks the bridal pair must be viewed as portraits. In commemoration of their entry into the estate of matrimony, they would have their portraits painted in the saintly goldsmith's shop. This explanation too seems to me unsatisfactory, because the two faces simply do not look like portraits. In my view, St. Eloy is represented as a goldsmith in a scene typical of his profession, with the well-born pair as the epitome of the bridal couple. If this is true, the picture may very well have been painted for a goldsmiths' guild (according to Weale, the one in Antwerp). One of the last members of this guild is said to have sold it to a M. de Sybel, from whose hands it passed into the possession of the Oppenheim family.

The painting fascinates by its matchless combination of solemn occasion with the painstakingly accurate representation of a goldsmith's shop. As against the rather large scale, there is a certain emptiness of form, but this is more than offset by the interest the richly secular theme arouses.

Madonna in Half-Length (57 × 39, without frame), in the possession of Count Matuschka-Greiffenklau, at Schloss Vollrads, Rheingau¹¹ (Plate 76) 1531. Signed and dated 1449.

This panel had been overpainted with a *Crucifixion*, dated 1559. In 1909 the restorer H. Fridt in Cologne cleaned it, and the delicacy of line and modelling seem to have suffered somewhat. In the restoration process, an inscription was uncovered on the original frame, in praise of the Virgin, and also including the master's signature: PETRVS · XPI · ME · FECIT · Aº · Dº · 1449.

F. Th. Klingelschmitt has published his observation that the pile of coins in the *St. Eloy* painting includes guilders on which the Wheel of Mainz can be made out¹². He relates this oddment to the commission for the *Madonna in Half-Length*, a painting that turned up along the Middle Rhine and that was done in 1449, like the *St. Eloy* panel. Eberhard von Greiffenklau, subdeacon at Mainz in 1428 and later canon there and in Utrecht—he died in 1489—might have arranged for the commission, and the coins from Mainz that formed part of Petrus Christus' fee may have been immortalized in the *St. Eloy* panel. The speculation is at least provocative.

Two altar wings in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin 1541 (Nos. 529A and B; 134 × 56 each), signed and dated 1452 (Plate 77). One shutter bears two paintings, one above the other, an *Annunciation* at the top, a *Nativity* below. The other is a *Last Judgment*. These panels were formerly in a church in Burgos, and then at Segovia; and their reverse sides are said to have at one time displayed Sts. Peter and Paul in Grisaille¹³.

9. Beffroi, Vol. 1, p. 240, and loc. cit., p. 13 ff.

10. *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, Vol. 2, p. 298 ff.

11. W. Cohen, *Zeitschrift für Christliche Kunst*, Vol. 22, 1909, p. 225 ff.

12. *Mainzer Goldgulden auf dem Eligiusbild...* H. Staadt, Wiesbaden, 1918.

13. Waagen, *Deutsches Kunstblatt*, 1884, p. 65.

The two panels are framed separately, but carry a continuous inscription at the bottom :

• petrus • xpi • me • fecit = anno • domini • M • CCCC • LII •

The lack of symmetry in scale and composition between the two shutters remains a puzzle. Nor do they properly correspond in subject matter. The *Last Judgment* is a free copy after the van Eyck painting in St. Petersburg (see p. 51, above). Petrus on his own would have been scarcely capable of creating the boldly foreshortened skeleton, on which St. Michael stands with one foot. These uncommonly well preserved panels give us an illustration of the master's style in his middle period.

The Virgin Enthroned, with Sts. Jerome and Francis, at the Städelsches Kunstinstitut Frankfurt (No. 99; 46 × 44) (Plate 78). Signed and dated 1457 (?).

This panel was acquired by Passavant from the Aders collection in London before 1836 and presented to the Frankfurt gallery. It formed the point of departure that led to recognition of the painter. Passavant read the numerals in the inscription as 1417. Later on, the indistinct third numeral was read as 4. In the judgment of Weizsäcker, as set down in the catalogue of 1900, traces of the figure 5 can be made out quite clearly and the date should be read as 1457. The remainder of the inscription on the step of the throne reads :

+ PETRVS · XPI = ME · FECIT

Weale objects to the view that the cardinal standing on the left is St. Jerome, regarding him as the donor, *sans doute François Condulmoro, neveu du pape Eugène IV*¹⁴. I doubt if the donor would have been represented standing opposite St. Francis and ranking with him, nor am I persuaded by Weale's sole argument, a supposedly striking resemblance between this figure and other members of the Condulmoro family!

¹⁴ Loc. cit., p. 12.

The panel is rather well preserved, but the heads, especially that of the Virgin, have suffered slight damage from rubbing.

Head of Christ with the Crown of Thorns, full-face, in the private collection of F. Kleinberger, Paris 1551, signed (Plate 79). The frame carries a smudged inscription that almost certainly includes the master's name. The sombre and tormented expression and the Eyckian style with its vigorous modelling confirm the imperfect evidence of the signature, making it certain that this small panel is Pieter's work.

Portrait of a Lady in Fine Attire, in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum 1561, Berlin (No. 532; 28 × 21) (Plate 80). The painting came from the Solly collection, and according to Waagen the original frame, now lost, bore the signature : *Opus Petri Christophori*¹⁵. The reading *Christophori* is certain to be erroneous. In respect of Weale's suggestion that the lady is the wife of Edward Grymston, I have already expressed myself on p. 82. The master's poverty of form actually benefits the impression of feminine grace, as does the slight body that of budding youth, while the rather chalklike flesh becomes luminous under the gentle round of the black head covering. The gaze, with a slight squint, deviates a little from the head's basic aspect towards the beholder, and this, together with the gentle slant of one eye, invests the

¹⁵ Manuscript note recorded in the Berlin catalogue.

face with a certain irregular charm. She looks at us, this lady, with a shy and slightly pained air, from the constraint of her elegant dress.

John the Baptist and St. Catherine, two altar wings in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin 1571 (Nr. 529 E.F.; 173 × 63 each), acquired in 1908 from private hands in Italy (Plate 81). These panels are imperfectly preserved, displaying sizable gaps that have been filled in by restorers. Somewhat vacant and scanty in form, as against the rather large scale, they are characteristic works from the master's mature period.

16. No. 9 in the catalogue of that year, published by Valentiner.

The Nativity, Henry Goldman collection, New York 1581 (40 × 28), acquired by Leo Blumenreich in Genoa in 1921, in the Goldman collection since 1922¹⁶ (Plate 82).

The panel is in a good state of preservation, except for a few flaws in the figure of the Virgin. The composition is very similar to that in the Berlin panel of 1452, but the painting is marked by stronger contrasts of light and dark and breathes a deeper mood and sense of unity.

The Virgin, standing framed in a round-arched doorway, in the National Gallery, Budapest (Pálffy collection, No. 235; 55.5 × 31.5) (Plate 83).

There are replicas of this composition:

a. St. Petersburg, Stroganoff collection (*Trésors d'Art en Russie*, 1901, No. 106) 1591.

b. Sellar auction, Paris, 1892, No. 9; Dollfus auction, Paris, 1912, No. 80; Paris auction, 14th February 1914, No. 4 1601.

Both of these replicas are inferior to the painting in Budapest and unlikely to be by the master's own hand.

The Lamentation, in the Metropolitan Museum, New York (26 × 35), from the Marquand collection (Plate 84).

This painting is well preserved, heavy in coloration and marked by sharp contrast between light and dark. The composition is somewhat contrived. The body of Jesus, resting on the ground, forms part of a semicircle, beginning on the right with one man who holds the end of the shroud, continuing on the left with another who raises up the Saviour's head and ending with Mary Magdalene who bends forward and reaches out her arms. This semicircle frames the figure of the swooning Virgin who is being supported by an apostle. The stocky figures with their broad heads are in sombre and rigid monotone, but they are intensely preoccupied and dramatically expressive. The painting shows little trace of Jan van Eyck and may be considered typical of Pieter's own style. It was probably done soon after 1450 and, in any event, represents the master's mature period.

The Lamentation, in the collection of Adolphe Schloss 1611, Paris (36 × 25) (Plate 85), exhibited in Bruges in 1902 (No. 325) and at the Guildhall, London, in 1907 (No. 30).

This painting shows signs of overcleaning in places. The low arch at the top is probably not the original termination 1621. The composition is rather milder in

tone and more flowing in conception than the New York panel, but no less characteristic of the master's style. The Virgin, seated, holds the body of Jesus in her lap, encircling his chest with her arms. Behind her stands St. John, and on his right, at the edge of the panel, a statuesque figure of a woman. On the left kneels Mary Magdalene, wringing her hands. The composition is loosely constructed and conspicuously lacking in symmetry.

The Exeter Madonna, in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum 1631, Berlin (No. 523 B; 19 x 14) (Plate 86).

This picture was acquired in 1888 in London, at the auction of the Marquis of Exeter (Burleigh House). It was then described as a work by Jan van Eyck, but later it was correctly attributed to Petrus Christus¹⁷.

In a perfect state of preservation, the panel represents one of Pieter's particularly felicitous works, leaning closely towards Jan van Eyck. It is all the more instructive, because we can compare it with the model the painter followed, the Rothschild Madonna (p. 61).

The Virgin stands in statuesque isolation on the right, in a porchlike area, open to the world through two arches on the left and two in the back, that unsparingly let the outside light flood in. A Carthusian monk kneels at left, in the characteristic donor's pose, with St. Barbara standing behind him. The donor's cassock agrees fold for fold with that in the Rothschild Madonna, hence must have been copied, but everything else is conspicuously different. The portrait itself, for example, is anything but a copy. The monk appears to be the same one who figures in the Rothschild Madonna, but he looks older, as though he had been delineated by Petrus Christus from life. The only plausible explanation for the relationship between the two paintings is this: the Carthusian commissioned the large one with the two female saints from Jan van Eyck shortly before 1442. After Jan van Eyck's death he ordered the small panel from the master's disciple, specifying that the white cassock was to be drawn exactly as Jan van Eyck had done it. It cannot be ruled out that Petrus actually worked in Jan van Eyck's workshop at the time the large panel was painted. This disposes of Weale's identification of the Carthusian as Herman Steenken (see p. 61, above) and provides an approximate date for the small panel—soon after 1444—for in it the donor does not look very much older than in the Rothschild Madonna. The differences between these panels by Jan van Eyck and Petrus Christus afford a singular opportunity for comprehending the imitator's creative character. Van Eyck's St. Barbara places her right hand on the donor's shoulder, gracefully brandishing a palm leaf with the other. Her attribute, the tower, is set into the landscape outside, in keeping with Jan's striving for the natural. There it stands, imposing, for all to see—but Pieter finds it necessary to place his tower model, built as though from a child's blocks, right on the floor of the porch. The saint must have her attribute by her side, holding on to it with her left hand, which makes it necessary for her right hand, resting on the monk's shoulder, to hold the palm leaf at the same time. This pedantically conceived little gesture speaks volumes.

17. Tschudi, *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, Vol. 10, 1889, p. 154 ff. and Vol. 15, 1894, p. 65 ff.

18. Gr. Ring, *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, Vol. 53, p. 75 ff.

19. *Annales de la Société d'Émulation de Bruges*, Vol. 28, p. 176 ff.

The Madonna of the Dry Tree (ten drooghen Boome) is a very small picture (14.7 × 12.4) that entered the collection of Ernst Oppler in Berlin 1641 from private hands in Belgium several years ago¹⁸ (Plate 87). In a perfect state of preservation and beyond any doubt stylistically a work by Petrus Christus, it exerts much of its charm on account of its unusual motive. It was painted for a member of the brotherhood to which many highly placed persons belonged and which the painter himself and his wife joined (see p. 82, above)¹⁹. Virgin and Child stand in the fork of a tree, the bare branches of which frame her figure, closing over her head like a crown of thorns. Fifteen Gothic *a's* dangle from the twigs, signifying fifteen Ave Marias. In type this Madonna is closely related to the *Exeter Madonna* in Berlin, suggesting an equally early date. The curving lines of drapery actually hint at a period preceding the *Exeter Madonna*, but I want to be careful in the conclusions I draw from the style. At the time Petrus Christus painted this little panel, there surely must have been a prototype *Madonna ten drooghen Boome* in the brotherhood's possession, which he may have copied, more or less—we shall never know.

Virgin and Child, Seated in a Hall, in the Prado, Madrid (No. 1921; 49 × 34) (Plate 88). A heavy coat of varnish disfigures this panel, but it is in every feature a characteristic work from the master's middle period 1651.

St. Anthony, with a Donor, in the Royal Gallery, Copenhagen (No. 63; 59 × 31) (Plate 90A). This painting is on the inside of the left wing of a triptych, and the reverse shows the angel of the Annunciation, in grisaille, curiously eking out a Madonna from the period of Rubens. (The dimensions given are those of the original shutter.) It is in a fine state of preservation, and an excellent work by Petrus Christus, painted soon after 1440. The master's style is so unmistakably impressed upon this panel that Weale's feebly argued surmise that it is part of the altar Hubert van Eyck²⁰ (according to existing documentation) did for Robert Poortier (see p. 35, above) does not impress. Weale's only argument is based on the statue of St. Anthony, mentioned in connection with Hubert van Eyck's altar.

Fragment, with a *Portrait of a Donor*, Kestner Museum, Hanover (No. 170; 32 × 19.5) (Plate 90B). This is part of an altar wing that has been cut down. It shows a donor, kneeling, in a white surplice. The ground all around the figure was painted over at one time. Removal of this coat has revealed remnants of the figure of a saint, standing behind the donor, and some architectural details. The dimensions given do not include a strip that has been added at the right.

20. In his large van Eyck book, p. 107 ff.

21. No. 16 in Weale's catalogue of the Northbrook collection, 1889.

The *Portrait of a Young Man*, in the National Gallery, London (Salting Bequest, 37 × 26.5), is a panel that was formerly part of the Northbrook collection in London²¹ (Plate 91). It was exhibited at Bruges in 1902 (No. 18). The young man, shown in half-length against a wall that is pierced towards both the right and left edges of the painting, holds a prayer book in both hands. This is probably half of a diptych, the other side of which showed a *Virgin*. On the wall at upper right is a sheet of parchment with a prayer and a head of Christ that resembles the one in the Kleinberger collection (see p. 84, above). The painting is well preserved, although the head has

been rather rigorously cleaned, emphasizing the lights and shadows a bit too harshly. In style it is especially close to the Berlin shutters of 1452, and it probably dates from about the same period.

The Crucifixion, at the Castle of Dessau, formerly in the Gotisches Haus at Wörlitz 1661 (25 × 23) (Plate 92), was exhibited at Bruges in 1902 (No. 19). Oddly enough, this well-preserved picture is on soft wood. Weale's conclusion from this curious fact is that it cannot have been painted in Flanders²², but the style militates against such a view. The painting, rich in figures, possesses all of Pieter's characteristic qualities and seems to have been done at an early period. There are vivid elements of movement in it and a wealth of landscape detail, all of which betokens the propinquity of Jan van Eyck. The soldiers seen from the rear, and other motives as well, permit the inference that Petrus knew Jan van Eyck's Petersburg *Crucifixion*—and indeed, he did utilize the *Last Judgment* from this same altarpiece (see p. 83, above).

22. *Loc. cit.*, p. 24.

The Lamentation, at the Royal Museum, Brussels (No. 139; 98 × 188) (Plate 93), was also exhibited at Bruges in 1902 (No. 20). This panel has undergone much scrutiny and a whole series of erroneous attributions. It is surely an excellently preserved piece of work by Pieter, but some of its stylistic peculiarities single it out as unique in the master's œuvre. In its main outlines, the composition is similar to the *Lamentation* in New York. The body of Jesus, the linen shroud on which he rests, and the figures of the two men, one of whom supports the Saviour's head, while the other holds the shroud in both hands—all these form a semicircle, encompassing the group of mourners, itself arranged in a circular pattern. Under the compulsion of the unusually wide field, two further elements have been added, without much coherence: to the left the averted figure of Mary Magdalene; to the right, set back slightly, a man and a woman standing.

Once it had been noted that the figure of the swooning Virgin with her drooping arm agrees in motive and movement with Rogier van der Weyden's grandiose *Descent from the Cross* at the Escorial, the source from which Petrus drew the entire strange character of his work was manifest. I do not doubt that even the figure of Mary Magdalene is essentially taken over from Rogier. Petrus must have been deeply impressed with the Brussels master's superior dramatic vigour, his devout gravity and skill in composition. This would explain what distinguishes this panel from all his others—the enhanced expression of sorrow, the surprising types and the brittle folds of the drapery. With this composition, the master of Bruges openly disavowed the van Eyck tradition, making his obeisance to the new style, by virtue of his adaptive nature. Petrus Christus did not need to go to Brussels (where Rogier worked), nor to Louvain (where the *Descent from the Cross* stood), to study Rogier's style. As we shall see, the Brussels master dominated the art of Bruges from 1460 onwards at the latest, whether because he worked there, or because works of his entered the churches of Bruges, or because disciples of his settled there. In any event, in Bruges the tradition of Jan van Eyck was superseded by the tradition of Rogier van der Weyden. And on at least this one occasion, Petrus was a traitor to his Eyckian heritage. Since none of his other paintings reveals a trace of this reversal, we may assume that the Brussels *Lamentation* is the latest of his works known to us.

Without full conviction, I add the following to Pieter's work :

Portrait of a Lady, in elegant attire after the fashion of about 1450 (57×40) (Plate 94), lent from the Ch. L. Cardon collection at Brussels for the Toison d'Or Exhibition at Bruges in 1907 (No. 191), where it was attributed to Hugo van der Goes, now in the Lehman Collection, New York. The painting is a bit harsh, in consequence of overcleaning, showing pure, empty lines, heavy modelling and a doll-like lack of animation, qualities that all mark the work of the Bruges master.

An *Annunciation*, in private hands in Paris 1671, seems to me a work of Pieter's, but I am unable to discuss it conclusively, having seen it only once, briefly, many years ago (Plate 95).

Petrus Christus is the only Netherlandish painter who surrendered resistlessly to Eyckian art ; and whatever glamour issues from his work is no more than the reflection of that powerful and archetypal light. The qualities that invest his work with stature and dignity are the very ones that lower the scale of judgment against him. He is invariably compared with Jan van Eyck, and the issue always seems to be to point up the differences between the two masters, while singling out the imitator's shortcomings. In Berlin, the *Exeter Madonna* was welcomed with open arms by experts like Bode and von Tschudi, as a work by Jan van Eyck. When this was recognized as an error, the only way of demonstrating it as such seemed to be to fasten upon the panel's weak points.

I want to be fair, and I think it is important to emphasize the value of intelligent emulation. Jan van Eyck, like all geniuses, was misunderstood by his contemporaries, and his achievements remained without immediate effect. Petrus Christus was able to follow him farther than did anyone else. The most essential elements in the art of Jan van Eyck that he grasped were the conception of space and the creation of the illusion of three-dimensional depth by means of vigorous shadows.

Pieter's figures are stocky rather than tall. They stand stiffly, enshrouded in their voluminous robes, which are reminiscent of armour in that they tell little of how the bodies are built, rather taking on balloonlike and tubular forms of their own. The heads of his subjects are ponderous, lofty of brow, wide of temple and cheek. Neutral areas of the head, including the ears, obtrude themselves. His noses are usually short. The hair of his women is parted in strands, drooping rather scantily to narrow shoulders. He seems to make no distinction in his bodies between muscle and bone. They look as though they had been turned out on a lathe. Their contours show little relief and overlap, running a smooth, slack, unaccented course. The master seems to conceive form purely as solid, geometric bodies—cylinders and spheres—and he fails when he is confronted with the need for elaborating complexities. When the scale is small, he is much better able to imbue his bodies with an air of animation. He is most successful in two areas of painting that had not yet achieved legitimate and autonomous status—still life and landscape. The jeweller's display in his *St. Eloy* manifests scrupulous objectivity towards the inanimate, the form and texture of which are carefully reproduced. The gently rolling countryside of Petrus Christus is crisscrossed with wavelike paths, strewn with houses and trees, drawn together in broad areas of colour, marked off from the sky in transparent depth.

His devotional and narrative approach is modest, frugal and unassuming, but sometimes carries an admixture of sullen and humourless obduracy. The smooth brushwork of Petrus Christus, his deep and harmonious colour schemes (at times on the dull side, to be sure), in which browns and maroons predominate, the vigour with which he shapes his interiors and models his figures—all these more than make up for a certain pettiness and limited vocabulary of form.

The Influence of Jan van Eyck

91

It is tempting to imagine that the immediate effect of the work of Jan van Eyck was in keeping with its importance, as seen in the perspective of history; for historians are prone to measure the significance of a phenomenon by its effect on other phenomena. *The Van Eycks and Their Followers* is what Sir Martin Conway called his historical essay, which spans the time from the van Eycks to the middle of the 16th century. The title honours the van Eycks as originators and initiators, subordinating the long sequence of early Netherlandish painters to them as mere followers. It all depends what one means by follower. If the term is meant to apply to a painter walking in the footsteps of one greater than he, it is hard to find a single follower of the van Eycks, except Petrus Christus. If it means one who develops and advances on his own the stimulating heritage of a predecessor, then, strictly speaking, not a single Netherlandish painter can lay claim to being called a follower of the van Eycks. The only one with good credentials is an Italian, Antonello da Messina. Yet he, born in Sicily in 1430, cannot possibly have been a student of Jan van Eyck in the literal sense. If he visited the Netherlands at all in the course of his studies, it was in the time after the death of his predecessor. Whatever he took over from the North in form, concept and technique—judging from his work—stemmed from his immersion in the work of the van Eycks, or possibly he caught some of their spirit from an acquaintance with some of their actual disciples. It was quite possible for Antonello to see Eyckian paintings right on Italian soil, or there to cultivate Netherlandish painters who could have passed on the Eyckian tradition to him. Indeed, we possess a documentary clue pointing to the possibility that in the year 1457 Antonello met Petrus Christus, the legitimate heir of Jan van Eyck, in Milan (see p. 82, above). Whether or not one doubts that the *Pietro* mentioned in the document in point is identical with Petrus Christus, a comparison of the art of these two painters renders a close relationship between them likely. With a glance towards this document, we may well consider the Sicilian artist as a second-generation student of Jan van Eyck.

There is no painter among the Netherlanders known to us, whose stewardship of the Eyckian heritage was as felicitous as Antonello's. True, we must never forget that only a small fraction of the original stock of Netherlandish paintings has come down to us. It is precisely on account of this deficiency that we are unable to observe the immediate effect of Eyckian art. Were we still in full possession, the art of many Netherlands towns—like Bruges, Ghent, Lille, Haarlem—would show signs of having woken up to the Eyckian challenge, sooner or later. But almost nothing has survived of the average run-of-the-mill output. The generation that matured about the middle of the century—in other words, the generation of Petrus Christus—should manifest the influence of Eyckian art. Ah, but how few in number are the remaining Netherlandish panels that were painted between 1430 and 1460, how few that can be assigned to that period with certainty! Jan van Eyck himself got about a good deal in the Netherlands, even crossed the frontiers to go to Portugal

and perhaps Burgundy as well. He may well have personally and directly instructed painters in more than one place. His works were scattered far and wide, and the magic of their colour, together with their skill in creating the illusion of space, may have stimulated more than one painter in more than one place to acquire the means for working such effects. Recipes for pigments were more readily transmitted than painting styles. The triumphant march of the new painting technique far outpaced creative progress.

If every effort fails to trace the influence of Eyckian art in detail, to show how Eyckian achievements were taken into other Netherlandish painters' studios, the fault may not lie solely in the dearth of surviving specimens but in the towering stature of the great innovator, the essence of whose achievement could not be expected to be grasped instantly. The predecessor may have faded from the followers' view. In any event, he was not given much time to exert his influence; for another style began to prevail widely as early as the middle of the 15th century, a style better and more easily understood than that of van Eyck, for more than one reason, as we shall see, the style of Rogier van der Weyden.

However that may be, the quest for panel paintings in the Eyckian style—works, in other words, that could be ascribed to students and immediate followers of Jan van Eyck—has yielded pitifully meagre results.

The work of such a student or immediate follower of Jan van Eyck is seen in *The Virgin by the Fountain* in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum (1681, Berlin (No. 525B; 57 x 41)¹ (Plate 96A). The composition is taken from van Eyck's Antwerp *Virgin* (see p. 44, above). Yet this panel, with its heavy colours and utterly different background, including Southern vegetation, is not simply a copy. The picture, incidentally, was acquired in Florence by O. Mündler and came to Berlin with the Suermondt collection.

Based similarly on the Antwerp *Virgin* is one in the Metropolitan Museum, New York (57 x 31) (Plate 96B), in which she is represented standing before a canopy framed with elaborate Gothic architecture². It was at one time in the choice collection of King William of Holland, and later in the A. J. Beresford Hope collection. It is painstakingly painted, and the drapery agrees fold for fold with the Antwerp *Virgin*. The arm movement of the infant Jesus, however, does not. In character and quality, the work ranks between Jan van Eyck and Petrus Christus.

An excellent piece of work by a follower of the van Eycks is the *Virgin* in the museum at Münster, Westphalia (No. 156; 84 x 66) (Plate 97A) (1691 in which the vigorous infant Jesus has been freely adapted from the van der Paele altarpiece. The painting is actually the property of the Berlin museum, having been placed on loan with the Westphalian Art Association in 1884. In it the Virgin is enthroned on a rather bare stone bench before a brocade runner. Modestly poised on either side of this wide seat are two angels. The panel was probably painted around 1450.

Since 1900 the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin has owned a *Portrait of a Young Man* (1701, shown holding a rose in his raised right hand (No. 523D; 18 x 12) (Plate 97B). Judging from the style of dress, it dates back to Jan van Eyck's own time and the deep and vigorous palette suggests the master. At the same time, its meagreness of form, attributable only in part to the panel's state of preservation, precludes his authorship.

1. Reproduced in Weale's large van Eyck book, p. 156.

2. Weale, p. 160.

The Metropolitan Museum, New York, has a fragment of an altar wing, with a *Portrait of a Donor* (9.5 × 8.5) 1711, formerly owned by H. C. Howard, Greystoke Castle (Plate 97c). It is in a rather pedantically mannered Eyckian style. In the 17th century, when it formed part of the Arundel collection, it was accounted a portrait of St. Thomas à Becket, and an etching of it made by Wenzel Hollar in 1647 is so identified, with the painter given as *Joh. ab Ayck*.

The von Nemes collection in Munich numbers among its possessions a panel, *The Virgin with St. John the Baptist and St. Jerome* 1721 (71 × 53.5) (Plate 98), clearly painted by a contemporary of Jan van Eyck who was strongly influenced by him but was not a slavish imitator. Three statuesque figures are shown in a rather humdrum interior that does not seem to enclose them altogether. The sweeping and plentiful lines of the generous draperies echo specifically Eyckian motives in many places, giving the painting its air of monumental grandeur. As far as I know, this curious panel, apparently painted in Jan van Eyck's lifetime, stands alone.

It is a fruitless undertaking to try to spot such individual works, painted in Jan van Eyck's lifetime or a little later, as might illustrate the master's impact on the art of his time, or even of his home, Bruges. His influence was too profound to be so simply manifested. It was exerted indirectly rather than by way of some standard formula any art student could use. Rather late, about 1500, there is a rise in the number of specimens imitating his style; but around 1440 none had made enough progress or mustered sufficient strength to continue his work. Yet his achievement did diffuse, by mysterious, subterranean pathways, and was not lost to ensuing generations. Without eliciting a direct following, his example served as an important stimulus, lending enhanced sophistication to the art of painting in the towns of Flanders and Holland, evident even when it is almost impossible to establish a direct connection with Eyckian art. Qualities at the heart of this art, such as its secular freedom of mind, the depth and harmony of its palette, its sense of light and space—these seem to be matters of personal grace that break out of any historical context.

Jan van Eyck's Works

An Approximate Chronology

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- 1416 The miniatures of the Turin-Milan Prayer Book (Page 48)
About 1423 *The Man with the Pinks*, Berlin (Page 58)
About 1424 *The Crucifixion* and *The Last Judgment*, altar wings, St. Petersburg 1351
(Page 51)
About 1425 *The Three Marys at the Tomb*, Cook Collection, Richmond 1161
(Page 51)
About 1426 *The Virgin in the Church*, Berlin (Page 52)
About 1427 *Crucifixion*, Berlin (Page 52)
(All the preceding by Hubert van Eyck, according to Hulin)
1427 (?)—1432 The Ghent altarpiece, begun by Hubert van Eyck before 1426
(Page 24)
About 1430 The original of *The Fountain of Life*, Madrid (Page 69)
1431 *Portrait of Cardinal Albergati*, Vienna, and the preliminary drawing for
it, Dresden (Page 57)
1432 *Portrait of the so-called Tymotheos*, London (Page 38)
1433 *The Ince Hall Madonna*, Melbourne (Page 39)
1433 *Portrait of a Man with a Turban*, London (Page 39)
About 1434 *The Annunciation*, St. Petersburg 1381 (Page 63)
About 1434 *Portrait of Arnolfini*, Berlin (Page 58)
1434 *Double Portrait of Arnolfini and His Wife*, London (Page 40)
About 1434 *Portrait of a Goldsmith*, Hermannstadt 1251 (Page 58)
About 1434 *The Lucca Madonna*, Frankfurt (Page 66)
About 1435 The small triptych, Dresden (Page 62)
1436 The van der Paele altarpiece, Bruges (Page 42)
1436 *Portrait of Jan de Leeuw*, Vienna (Page 41)
About 1436 *The Virgin and Child with Chancellor Rolin*, Paris (Page 60)
1437 *St. Barbara*, Antwerp (Page 43)
About 1437 *Portrait of Baudouin de Lannoy*, Berlin (Page 58)
About 1438 *The Madonna with Two Female Saints*, Paris, Rothschild 1341 (Page 61)
About 1438 *The Stigmatization of St. Francis*, Two panels, Turin and Philadelphia
(Page 62)
About 1438 *A Donor*, fragment, Leipzig (Page 59)
1438 *Head of Jesus* (original ?), Berlin (Page 68)
1439 *Portrait of the Painter's Wife*, Bruges (Page 45)
1439 *Virgin and Child by the Fountain*, Antwerp (Page 44)
1440 *Head of Jesus* (original ?), English private collection 1451 (Page 68)
1441 The van Maelbeke altarpiece 1391 (Page 64)

The Works of Petrus Christus

An Approximate Chronology

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- About 1444 *St. Anthony with a Donor*, Copenhagen (Page 87)
- About 1444 *The Exeter Madonna*, Berlin (Page 86)
- About 1444 *The Madonna of the Dry Tree*, Oppler collection, Berlin 1641 (Page 87)
- About 1445 *The Crucifixion*, Dessau Castle 1661 (Page 88)
- About 1445 *The Virgin*, Budapest (Page 85)
- 1446 *Portrait of Edward Grymeston*, Corhambury (Page 82)
- 1446 *Portrait of a Monk*, Valencia 1521 (Page 82)
- About 1446 *Portrait of a Lady*, Berlin (Page 84)
- 1449 *St. Eloy*, Lehman Collection, New York (Page 82)
- 1449 *Madonna in Half-Length*, Vollrads Castle, Rheingau 1531 (Page 83)
- About 1450 *Head of Christ with the Crown of Thorns*, Kleinberger collection, Paris 1551 (Page 84)
- About 1450 *John the Baptist and St. Catherine*, Berlin 1571 (Page 85)
- 1452 Two altar wings, Berlin (Page 83)
- 1457 (?) *The Virgin Enthroned, with Sts. Jerome and Francis*, Frankfurt (Page 84)
- About 1460 Fragment with a *Portrait of a Donor*, Hanover (Page 87)
- About 1460 *The Virgin and Child, Seated in a Hall*, Madrid (Page 87)
- About 1460 *Portrait of a Young Man*, London (Page 87)
- About 1460 *The Nativity*, Goldman Collection, New York (Page 85)
- About 1460 *The Lamentation*, New York (Page 85)
- About 1460 *The Lamentation*, Schloss Collection, Paris 1611 (Page 85)
- About 1465 *The Lamentation*, Brussels (Page 88)

Afterword

97

Books on the history of art come into being in two different ways. One can make up one's mind to write a work about Dürer, and then proceed with examining pictures and documents, in order to be able to write it. It is almost unavoidable in this process—very soon, if not at the very outset—that one conceives some arbitrary scheme, to which the innocent eye then falls victim. On the other hand, one can remain preoccupied with works of art for many decades before feeling the urge to communicate one's experiences in book form.

No one is likely to be under any misapprehension that my book belongs to the second category, and perhaps the indulgent reader will grant me that it is little freighted with prejudice and bias. Yet my severer critics will reproach me for gaps and contradictions and lack of cohesion, a consequence of the manner in which the book was done. I had a foreboding of such strictures when I eschewed the word 'history' in my title. Even if I have not reared a building, I may perhaps pride myself upon having gathered bricks for one.

Since views rooted in stylistic criticism are always in a state of flux, I have felt obliged to re-examine much I have said, especially in the earlier volumes. In the present, final volume, I have assembled substantial corrections and supplements, in the form of appendices, unfortunately giving the reader the bother of reading this material in conjunction with the earlier volumes.

It is preceded by three chapters about Pieter Bruegel. In my presentation, this master may seem separated from his historical context rather than integrated with it. A fool he who gives more than he has.

(from Volume XIV)

Introduction to Notes and Supplements to Volumes I-XIII

98

The year 1924 saw the appearance of the first volume of *Die Altniederländische Malerei* and year after year, other volumes have followed. Profoundly convinced of the fallibility of all efforts in stylistic analysis, I have never ceased to re-examine pictures on which I had voiced opinions, sceptically weighing every sentence of my printed text, to see whether it stood up and was compatible with the recent flood of new picture finds. I was intent, further, upon learning from the researches of others which either had escaped me or which I could not have consulted at the time.

Apart from excursions and subsequent disquisitions touching upon major problems, the pages that follow contain notes and supplements to the picture lists. The zeal with which I have pursued completeness was in some measure dependent on the master's importance. My data on the locations of the pictures will, I am afraid, be found something short of satisfactory. Many of the pieces are now adrift upon the currents of the art trade, and it is scarcely possible to follow the continual changes of ownership. On top of that, many art dealers have moved about in the past decade, and some firms now have establishments in more than one place. Many paintings are jointly owned by several dealers. All these circumstances make proper registration difficult. Often I had no alternative to giving the location where I last saw the picture and naming the owner who had shown it to me.

In a few cases I have introduced the term 'workshop product' (*Werkstattarbeit*), to describe conspicuously and troublesomely crude execution of compositions that, nevertheless, clearly show the master's characteristic and superior concept. Of course, I cannot in any way vouch for all pictures lacking this cautionary note being 'by the master's own hand,' in the strictest sense. This precarious question can seldom be answered with an outright yes or no but is usually a matter of 'more or less.' We know enough about the way the Netherlanders worked in the 15th and 16th centuries to realize that this particular kind of authenticity is relative. I call attention to the instructive legal controversy in the matter of the altarpiece ordered from the Bruges master Albert Cornelisz. in 1517. The contract included a clause specifying that he was required to do the more important parts—especially the flesh—with his own hand (cf. Vol. XI, p. 94 of the German edition).

Participation by assistants, especially in the case of large altarpieces, must always be taken for granted. When we use the term workshop product, it merely means that the assistants were a clumsy lot. There were adroit ones as well; indeed, there are cases when the assistant was his master's better. I am thinking of the work of Jan van Scorel in the studio of Jacob of Amsterdam and of what van Mander said about it (cf. Vol. XII, p. 121 of the German edition). Father and son sometimes worked in partnership. Jan Massys was his father's partner during Quentin's final years, and Cornelis van Cleve the partner of his father Joos. In such cases it is almost impossible to distinguish the two hands and the respective shares.

The question of how much a master may have painted with his own hand can be

posed only with reference to the kind of man he was, and to his stature as a painter. A genius like Jan van Eyck could have scarcely collaborated with assistants in the same way as an Adriaen Isenbrant. The only purposes for which Jan van Eyck could have used students must have been of a technical and subaltern character. Things are rather different even in the case of Rogier van der Weyden, whose formal idiom was imitable in higher degree. We have replicas of some of his altarpieces, admirably executed in his studio, probably by assistants who were careful copyists. The lower we descend, in respect of a master's creative power—in other words, the less free, personal and spontaneous his approach was—the more difficult it becomes to gauge how much he painted with his own hand.

The occurrence of replicas of equal merit—in the œuvre of the Master of Frankfurt and Joos van Cleve, for example—points to close, successful and fruitful collaboration between master and pupils.

Strictly speaking, the only kinds of pupils we are likely to spot are those who are either dull or wilful, evading the discipline the master imposed.

The supplementary plates of this volume fill certain gaps in the material published in the earlier volumes and include a number of distinguished works that have recently turned up.

(from Volume XIV)

Supplement to the van Eycks

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A learned and very remarkable book on the iconographic interpretation of the Ghent altarpiece has been published¹. Surprisingly, it demonstrates that the altarpiece as a whole follows the 13th and last vision of St. Hildegard, as set down in her book, *Scivias*.

Much has been written during the past decade on the baffling problem, the most important one of all, concerning the share in execution of the Ghent altarpiece of the 'elder brother Hubert.' So far as I can see, no plausible answer to this ancient question has come forth.

I eliminated the elder brother in my presentation and endeavoured to explain the considerable stylistic variations within the multifarious œuvre as stages in the development of Jan van Eyck. I emphasized that all efforts to distinguish two hands had been fruitless. Jan rather than Hubert is celebrated as the pioneer in the 15th and early 16th centuries. Hubert's fame rests on the inscription on the Ghent altarpiece.

In two fervent and spirited volumes², Emile Renders propounds the theory that the quatrain on the Ghent altarpiece was composed much later, perhaps in the early 17th century, and thus proves nothing, one way or the other. Hubert van Eyck he views as no more than a fictitious figure, inspired by the local pride of the burghers of Ghent. This bold sortie was anticipated by Franz Dülberg, who was a poet as well as an art historian, when he made the qualification that the inscription might yet be proved a forgery³. The criticism Renders excited either ignored or trivialized the arguments he put forward in support of his radical view.

The inscription that exalts Hubert as *maior quo nemo repertus* exerted no effect whatever between 1432 and 1550. It conferred no fame on the elder brother.

The newer stylistic analysis has utterly failed in its zealous efforts at following the inscription verbatim and dissecting the Ghent altarpiece into two parts.

Lucas de Heere of Ghent, painter, poet and antiquarian, who wrote a long poem about the Ghent altarpiece around 1560, ignored the crucial data in the quatrain, mentioning neither the date nor the donor, Jodocus Vijd.

Van Mander, who lived in Ghent when he was young, wrestled with the question whether the brothers began the work together, or whether Jan worked on it only after Hubert. He seemed unaware that this is the very question the inscription answers unequivocally.

Those who conclude from these considerations that the inscription was not there in 1550 have been answered with the argument that the altarpiece was viewed only with the shutters open, hence the inscription on the outside was not read. It is true that van Mander describes only the inside, yet the triptych usually stood closed and was only occasionally opened, as van Mander relates. Vaernewyck, who also seems to know nothing of the inscription, did see the outside of the altarpiece. He mentions the portraits of the donors⁴.

It was Jan and not Hubert who was singled out as the premier Netherlandish painter, in every sense, during the 15th and the first half of the 16th centuries. Oc-

1. Lod. Clysters, *Kunst en Mystiek, De Aanbidding van het Lam*, 1935, St. Norbertus Drukkerij, Tongerloo.

2. *Hubert van Eyck, Personage de Légende*, G. van Oest, Paris and Brussels, 1933; *Jean van Eyck, son Œuvre... Firme Charles Beyaert*, Bruges, 1935.

3. *Handbuch der Kunswissenschaft, Niederländische Malerei der Spätgotik*, Wildpark-Potsdam, Athenaion (undated), p. 8.

4. *Van die Beroerlike Tijden in die Nederlanden*, 1566-68. He remarks, in direct conflict with the inscription, that Hubert and Margaret van Eyck were great artists, but inferior to their brother Jan.

casional attempts have been made to invalidate this argument by suggesting that the younger brother was brought to the fore in error by poorly informed Italians. Yet the choir of voices that ignore Hubert is thoroughly international. Lemaire, a Frenchman familiar with conditions in the Netherlands (about 1510), Dürer (1521), the Spaniard Felipe de Guevara (about 1540), the Dutchman Lambert Lombard, in a letter to Vasari (1565)—they all say the same.

I did overlook a single, somewhat obscure mention of Hubert before 1565, and this has recently been adduced against Renders. In 1517 or 1518 Cardinal Luigi d'Aragona visited Ghent, and after viewing the altarpiece his companion Antonio de Beatis noted : *Et secondo dicevano quelli canonici, è que forno facte da un maestro de la Magna Alta [Upper Germany] decto Roberto già cento anni... quale non havendola decto maestro possuto finire perchè se morsè, fu compita dal fratello quale anche era gran pictore.* Here is a remarkable early statement mentioning two masters, brothers—but it does not at all prove that the inscription was then present. The Italian may have misunderstood the explanation—Robert for Hubert. In any event, had these clerics known of the inscription, they might have expressed themselves more clearly. Clysters, by the way—in an ingenious but rather far-fetched argument—connects the statement with the Convent of St. Robert's near Bingen (in Upper Germany !), of which St. Hildegard had been the abbess. The place name of the saint whose vision is represented in the altarpiece had in some curious fashion become garbled into the name of a second painter, 'Roberto,' later changed to Hubert, who had then been enshrined in tradition. Here, in Clysters's view is the root—or at least one root—of the Hubert van Eyck legend⁵.

Whoever has read my first volume will recall how tortuously I evaded the inscription, with something of a bad conscience. Hence it is understandable that I should have welcomed Renders's theory with a sigh of relief, since it would seem to dispose of a problem. Yet I find it hard to follow the Bruges connoisseur in all the conclusions he draws from his acute and well-founded criticism of the inscription. Even when I agree with him that the verses may have been added to the frame only about 1600, the question still remains how the author of the quatrain arrived at the dates, in part correct, which he wove into such abstruse poetic form. 'Legends' usually contain a kernel of truth. Awareness of two brothers as the masters of the altarpiece may reach back to 1517, and certainly to 1560.

According to Ghent documents, there seems to have been a painter named Hubert van Eyck. In the year 1425, a *Meester Luberecht* received payment for two sketches from the magistrates. In the same year, apprentices of Master *Ubrecht* received gratuities. In 1426, *Meester Hubrechte* polychromed a statue of St. Anthony. After 18th September 1426, there is mention of heirs of *Lubrecht van Heyke*. There is no proof that the painter *Luberecht* is identical with *Lubrecht van Heyke*, who is not expressly described as a painter. Yet the likelihood remains that the four entries relate to the same person, even though it does not follow that he was brother to Jan van Eyck and worked with him on the Ghent altarpiece.

Hulin de Loo has opened up a path to the personality of Hubert van Eyck, without becoming involved in the dissection of the Ghent altarpiece. I have reported at length on the miniatures in the Turin Prayer Book, in which the Belgian scholar has beyond question discovered the Eyckian style at an early phase (shortly before

⁵. *Loc. cit.*, p. 205.

1417). Against Hulin and with Renders, I remain inclined to regard Jan rather than Hubert as the painter of the illuminations created for William of Holland, predecessor and brother of John of Holland, whom Jan van Eyck demonstrably served between 1422 and 1424.

After all the fruitless endeavours to determine Hubert's share in the painting of the Ghent altarpiece, Beenken, undaunted by the confusion of counsel, has valiantly embarked on a new division⁶.

He proceeds from a sound premise. The whole altarpiece lacks coherence. Its double-tier structure has no precedent. Beenken is convinced that Hubert originally planned (and in part executed) only a wide, low altarpiece, consisting of the five lower panels. After Hubert's death, Jan added the upper storey, finished and sharply modified the lower and painted the outside all by himself. In his illustrations, Beenken juxtaposes what, in his opinion, was painted by the one brother and what by the other. Unfortunately, the result is of little use. Nothing like an individual Hubertian style can be distinguished from that of Jan. Indeed, the differences Beenken indicates are of far lesser degree than the differences among the many panels that fall to the younger brother's lot according to this division.

Different explanations for the lack of uniformity in the altarpiece have been given by others. Van Mander reports that Philip the Good, then Count of Charolais, had commissioned it. Since, in the famous inscription, the name of Jodocus Vijd is bracketed with that of Jan van Eyck in the completion of the altarpiece, the theory has been advanced that the burghers of Ghent acquired portions of one and possibly two, unfinished altarpieces, ordering them to be blended into one. A variant of this theory has it that John of Bavaria (who died in 1425) was the original patron, rather than Philip of Burgundy.

These vague speculations point to Jan rather than Hubert, for Jan was court painter to both the Bavarian and the Burgundian princes. They are incompatible, as is Beenken's proposal, with the most recent iconographical interpretation, for Clysters derives the total conception of the altarpiece from the vision of St. Hildegard.

If one must look for Hubert van Eyck, crediting the inscription on the Ghent altarpiece at least to that extent, one might consider the theory that the 'elder brother' painted the predella of the triptych with its representation of hell. Reports of this lost portion of the Ghent altarpiece are commonly ignored. No doubt they are true, precisely because it sounds so improbable. This bottom piece was painted in tempera and destroyed by clumsy cleaning. Jan van Eyck rather than Hubert is extolled as the inventor of oil painting. Lucas de Heere says Hubert began the work 'as was his wont.' It seems reasonable to interpret this curious remark as meaning that Hubert began the work in traditional tempera technique, which provides some support for the view that he may have been the painter of the predella.

Panofsky, finally, has claimed the *Annunciation* in the Metropolitan Museum at New York for Hubert van Eyck⁷, a painting with which I became familiar when it was in private ownership in Paris and which I have ascribed to Petrus Christus (Plate 95). Panofsky does not proceed on the basis of the Turin miniatures, hence can have derived his views on Hubert's style solely from the upper tier of the Ghent altarpiece, which he seems to regard as the work of that master, with Dvořák. His learned and profound study, almost entirely iconographical in character, proves

6. *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Genter Altars*, Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch, 1933/4, p. 186 ff.

7. *The Art Bulletin*, The College Art Association of America, University of Chicago, Vol. 17, 1935.

only that the *Annunciation* is extremely archaic in composition. I am not quite sure how this method could throw light on the character of Hubert van Eyck, especially since Petrus Christus may have copied an original painting from the distant past.

Now that the most recent probings, conducted with an amazing array of acumen, have unearthed nothing that might bring Hubert into better focus, I stick to the idea which Renders has made so plausible in his second volume, with its excellent illustrations. Everything of Eyckian art that has come down to us can be fitted into the development of a single master of genius, Jan van Eyck.

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In respect of individual works by Jan van Eyck, this supplementary information :

The altar wings in the Hermitage have been acquired for the Metropolitan Museum, New York ; the *Annunciation* from the same gallery has gone to the Mellon collection, Washington 1731.

The triptych from Louvain is now in private ownership in Paris 1741.

The miniatures in the Trivulziana in Milan have been transferred to Turin, to replace the burned portions of the Prayer Book.

The œuvre of Jan van Eyck has been enriched by the grisaille wings with an *Annunciation* (38 × 23 each) (Plate 99), which I published in the *Burlington Magazine* (Vol. 65, 1934, p. 3) and which have gone to the Thyssen (Schloss Rohoncz) Collection at Lugano.

My meagre chapter on drawings in the Eyckian style may now be supplemented by calling attention to four invaluable metalpoint drawings, property of members of the Polish nobility, which have gone, two each, to the Mannheimer collection in Amsterdam 1751 (Plate 100) and the van Beuningen collection in Rotterdam 1761 (Plate 101). They represent designs for statues of nobles for the tomb of Count Louis de Male, which Philip the Good had constructed in Lille. I think I see the hand of Jan van Eyck in these exquisite sheets, which merit a separate publication.

(from Volume XIV)

Supplement to Petrus Christus

104 I have become acquainted with three works of importance since concluding my chapter on Petrus Christus :

A *Nativity*, purchased from private hands in Spain by Duveen Bros. and recently acquired by the Mellon collection, Washington 1771 (Plate 102). This panel (128 × 96) is among the finest creations by the Bruges master that have come down to us. Its distinguishing feature is an encircling archway with painted sculpture, one of Rogier van der Weyden's hallmarks.

The Detroit Museum has acquired a *St. Jerome* from a member of the North German aristocracy, a panel allegedly signed with the date 1442, which I did not note myself (Plate 103). W. Valentiner inclines to regard it as a work of Jan van Eyck, and a strong piece of evidence can be cited for this attribution, for the Medici in Florence owned a *St. Jerome* by *Giovanni di Bruggia*, according to an inventory of 1492. From its description and from a fresco by Ghirlandaio in the church of Ognissanti, in which the van Eyck composition seems to have been freely adapted, we may assume that the Detroit panel is at least similar to, if not identical with the Medici painting. Petrus Christus may have copied the original by Jan van Eyck. If so, this would explain why his *St. Jerome* harks back so strongly to the master.

The date of 1442 is neither here nor there. Jan van Eyck had already died by then and Petrus Christus did not get his patent as a full-fledged master craftsman in Bruges until 1444. Valentiner inclines to the view that van Eyck began the painting late in life, while Petrus Christus, coming into his heritage, finished and dated it.

There are, finally, two altar wings with portraits of donors, now in the Kress collection, New York 1781 (Plate 104).

The following changes of locale should be noted :

The *Portrait of a Carthusian* is now in the Bache collection, New York 1521 (29 × 21). The date is 1446, not 1466.

The *Madonna in Half-Length* is now in the Thyssen collection, Lugano 1531. A recent cleaning has greatly enhanced its effect.

The *Head of Christ* is now in the collection of R. Timken, New York 1551.

The *Madonna of the Dry Tree* is now in the collection of Dr. Fritz Thyssen, Mülheim-on-Rhine 1641.

The *Crucifixion* is now in the Dessau Museum 1661.

The *Annunciation* is now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, as part of the Friedsam Bequest (77.5 × 65.5). Panofsky attributes this painting to Hubert van Eyck (see p. 102, above).

An excellent *Portrait of a Man*, which I did not mention, has passed from the Holford to the Mellon collection 1791, where it is attributed to Petrus Christus (Plate 105). I can accept this only with reservations, since I have not had an opportunity to examine this painting for a long time.

(from Volume XIV)

Editor's Note

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Many opinions have been expressed on Eyckian problems, many insights into them have been gained, yet it would be difficult to claim that their final solution has yet been reached. The definition of these problems and the analysis of van Eyck's paintings undertaken by Friedländer in Volume I of *Die Altniederländische Malerei* and completed by the supplement in Volume XIV, issued in 1937, have never been superseded. On the major question of the Ghent altarpiece, for example, one can only repeat what Friedländer wrote in 1937: 'Much has been written during the past decade on the baffling problem, the most important one of all, concerning the share in the execution of the Ghent altarpiece of the "elder brother Hubert". So far as I can see, no plausible answer to this ancient question has come forth' (80). It is true that this lack of a plausible answer led him to change in 1937 the views he expressed in 1924 on the question of Hubert. But this change, to anyone who carefully reads Volume I, is less radical than it seems, for there Friedländer already centers his discussion of Eyckian art on Jan. And in Volume XIV, far from denying Hubert's existence, he answers Renders's 'Hubert van Eyck, Personnage de Légende' with the assertion that 'Legends usually contain a kernel of truth' (81). Friedländer's hesitancy when confronted with the enigma of the Ghent altarpiece still leaves the two opposing positions open to the reasonable art historian or critic—until, some day, the discovery of new evidence may tip the scales to one side for good. Some fascinating contributions have been made; but if one is guided by the reticence with which Friedländer himself at the time accepted Renders's thesis—which was, indeed, grist to his mill—one must admit that the definitive solution to the problem is still to be found. Modern scientific research may yet have its say, especially on the technical aspects of the work's execution.

Many authors have studied the question. The reader will find bibliographies on the subject in two important publications issued lately: L. Baldass, *Jan van Eyck*, London and New York, 1952; and E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting. Its Origins and Character*, Cambridge, Mass., 1953. In general, the passionate controversy on the rôle of Hubert, started by Renders's radical theory, has slowly ebbed. Certainly Friedländer's approval in 1937, although given only with reservations, contributed towards making it an important issue (82). It was accepted by a number of art historians, including Lavallee 1831, Musper 1841 and Tovell 1851; and the impetuosity of the theory's originator found a picturesque echo in Brockwell 1861, a former collaborator of Weale. The scientific examination of the altarpiece, conducted in 1950-51 by Coremans 1871, revealed numerous and important changes in composition, dating from the time when the painting was executed. But this examination did not provide conclusive evidence that two different artists worked on the altarpiece.

Another group of art historians have continued to defend the possible existence and contribution of Hubert van Eyck: Beenken 1881, Panofsky 1891, Tolnay 1901,

Hulin de Loo 1911, Duverger 1921, Baldass 1931 and Dhanens 1941 are a few. More recently, there has been a tendency to refrain from taking sides and to be content with registering only facts that are certain : Davies 1951 and Folie 1961 may be cited here. New contributions to be issued in the near future include those by L. B. Philip, suggesting that Hubert was the sculptor of a monumental frame, now lost, in which the altarpiece was placed, J. K. Steppe, discussing the iconography of the altarpiece in relation to the question of its compositional unity, and L. M. J. Delaissé, writing on the importance of North Netherlandish illumination to the study of Eyckian art ; lastly, promising new technical methods to reveal underdrawings more completely are being developed by J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer (See 'Infrared Reflectograms of Panel Paintings' in *Studies in Conservation*, II, 1966, pp. 45 ff.) of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, with the collaboration of the Institut Royal du Patrimoine Artistique, Brussels ; they have been applied to the Ghent altarpiece in November 1966. The original location of the Mystic Lamb in the Ghent cathedral has been discussed by De Schryver and Marijnissen 1971.

Besides the Ghent altarpiece, most of the Eyckian paintings have been the subject of publications. Among noteworthy examples are : Desneux 1981 and Deelman, 1991 on the van der Paele altar panel (Bruges) ; Lejeune 1900, Desneux 1901 and Quarré 1902, on the *Virgin and Child with Chancellor Rolin* (Louvre) ; Panofsky 1903, on the *St. Jerome* (Detroit) ; the same author 1904, on the so-called *Portrait of Tymotheos* (London) ; Kaufmann 1905, Panofsky 1906, Davies 1907, Desneux 1908, Held 1909 and others, on the *Marriage of Arnolfini* (London). The *Fountain of Life* (Prado) has been studied by Bruyn 1910, and the Turin-Milan Book of Hours by Lyna 1911, Châtelet 1912 and Schilling 1913. Complete documentations for the paintings in the museums of Bruges, Turin and London (National Gallery) are provided in the *Corpus des Primitifs Flamands* 1914. The general and very complete works by Baldass and Panofsky, mentioned above, study each painting in detail.

There are publications that examine drawings or copies, such as that by Held 1915. Other publications, such as those by Cels 1916 and Goris 1917, study the origins of the van Eyck family. Still others, such as Birkmeyer 1918, treat of the meaning of Eyckian art, or study the history of the appreciation of that art, notably von Löheysen 1919 and Sulzberger 1920. Lastly, there is a history, by Sosson, 1921, of the Bruges paintings, in the light of 19th and 20th century documents.

Far fewer authors have written about Petrus Christus and his art since 1937 than on the van Eycks. Bazin 1922 studied one aspect of his art. Schöne proposed a new catalogue of his works, in an appendix to his book on Dieric Bouts 1923. Panofsky, especially, has written penetratingly on Petrus Christus 1924. A definitive monograph on this painter remains to be written.

ADDENDA

All the paintings by Jan van Eyck that survive seem to have been identified. Only one fragment has been discovered since 1937 that can be added to the catalogue of his works :

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Fragment with Architectural Detail (from a *Virgin in Majesty, in a Niche?*). Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, 33 × 16 cm, oak (Plate 106). Published by P. Quarré, 'Fragment d'un Primitif de la Chartreuse de Champmol au Musée des Arts Décoratifs,' in *La Revue des Arts*, VII, 1957, pp. 59–64.

A painting related to Eyckian art, possibly painted in London by a follower of Jan van Eyck, is of documentary interest :

Portrait of Marco Barbarigo. The National Gallery, London, No. 696; 24 × 16 cm, oak (Plate 107A). Cf. M. Davies, 'The National Gallery, London' (*Les Primitifs Flamands*, I. *Corpus de la Peinture des Anciens Pays-Bas Méridionaux au Quinzième Siècle*, 3), II. Antwerp, 1954, pp. 135–138.

In his first volume, Friedländer did not systematically list all copies. Two that are of documentary interest for the study of the originals are added here :

The Virgin in the Church. Rodriguez Bauzá Collection, Madrid, 31 × 24 cm, oak, dated 1623 (Plate 107B). The Virgin is worshipped by Christian Druvaeus, Abbot of the Dunes, accompanied by an archbishop-martyr and Sts. Christina and Reine. Published by J. Lavalleye, 'Collections d'Espagne' (*Les Primitifs Flamands*, II. *Répertoire des Peintures Flamandes des Quinzième et Seizième Siècles*) I, Antwerp, 1953, pp. 26–27.

Portrait of Cardinal Albergati, detail of *The Gallery of an Art Collector*, signed by David Teniers II, London, Count A. Seilern collection, 58.5 × 79 cm, on wood (Plate 107C). The portrait is placed in a prominent position in the painting which shows in detail a private art collection before 1642. A few years later, the portrait was bought by Teniers for the Gallery of Archduke Leopold William of Habsburg. See S. Speth-Holterhoff, *Les Peintres Flamands de Cabinets d'Amateurs au XVII^e Siècle*, Brussels, 1957, pp. 129–130; see also Note 24.

On the other hand, a number of works have been added to the catalogue of Petrus Christus, one of them, a *Death of the Virgin*, by Friedländer himself.

The Man of Sorrows, with two Angels. City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, 11.4 × 8.6 cm, on wood (Plate 108B). Published by J. Rowlands, 'A Man of Sorrows by Petrus Christus,' in *The Burlington Magazine*, CIV, 1962, pp. 419–423.

The Virgin and Child, in a Chamber. Nelson-Atkins Gallery of Art, Kansas City, No. 1956-51; 69.5 × 58 cm, oak (Plate 109). [Cf. J. Folie] in *Flanders in the Fifteenth Century : Art and Civilization. Catalogue of the Exhibition Masterpieces of Flemish Art : Van Eyck to Bosch*. The Detroit Institute of Arts, 1960, Brussels, 1960, pp. 94–98.

The Virgin and Child, with an Angel. A replica of the Prado painting, cf. p. 87, private collection, Madrid, 51 × 33 cm, oak (Plate 89). Published by J. Lavalleye, 'Collections d'Espagne' (*Les Primitifs Flamands*, II. *Répertoire des Peintures Flamandes des Quinzième et Seizième Siècles*) I, Antwerp, 1953, pp. 29–30.

A Female Donor and St. Elizabeth of Hungary. The left wing of an altarpiece, Stedelijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten (Groeninge Museum), Bruges, No. 1614; 79 × 33 cm, oak (Plate 110). Published by V. Vermeersch, *Stedelijke Musea Brugge. Tentoonstelling Aanwinsten 1965. Catalogus*, Bruges, 1966, pp. 6–7.

108 *The Death of the Virgin.* The Putnam Foundation, San Diego, California, 172.1 × 138.1 cm, oak (Plate 111). Published by M. J. Friedländer, 'The Death of the Virgin by Petrus Christus,' in *The Burlington Magazine*, LXXXVIII, 1946, pp. 159–163.

Portrait of Philip the Good. Prince de Ligne Collection, Beloeil, 43.5 × 23.5 cm, oak (Plate 109A). Published in the catalogue: *Exposition Bruxelles au xv^e Siècle, 9 octobre–22 novembre 1953. Musée Communal. Bruxelles*, [Brussels, 1953,] No. 107.

Notes

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1. Technical investigation in 1951 indicates that this tower is a 16th-century addition. See P. Coremans (under the direction of), 'L'Agneau Mystique au Laboratoire. Examen et Traitement' (*Les Primitifs Flamands, III. Contributions à l'Etude des Primitifs Flamands*, 2), Antwerp, 1953, pp. 112-114.
2. The panel of the 'Upright Judges' was stolen in 1934 and has never been recovered. See K. Martier and N. Kerckhaert, *De Diefstal van de Rechtvaardige Rechters*, Antwerp, 1966.
3. In the original edition: *saniti*, a misprint for *sancți*.
4. In the original edition: 1433, a misprint for 1432.
5. Following the technical investigations conducted in 1951, P. Coremans (*op. cit.*, pp. 120-122) suggested the possibility that this inscription may be a 16th-century overpainting, covering an earlier one.
6. Now in the *Stedelijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten* (Groeninge Museum).
7. Now in the *Stedelijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten* (Groeninge Museum).
8. Since then, exhibited at the National Gallery, London, in 1922; at the New York World's Fair in 1939 (No. 113); in the same year at The Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco. In 1940, it was shown at the Cleveland Museum of Art and, in 1941, at the Cincinnati Art Museum. In 1956, it was sent to Belgium for the Exhibition in Bruges, 'Flemish Art in British Collections' (No. 2). On this occasion, the painting underwent a thorough technical examination, the results of which have been included in U. Hoff, *National Gallery of Victoria. Catalogue of European Paintings before Eighteen Hundred*, Melbourne, 1961, pp. 46 ff.
9. During the restoration of 1933-34, this overpaint was removed. See A. Janssens de Bisthoven, 'Musée Communal des Beaux-Arts (Musée Groeninge), Bruges' (*Les Primitifs Flamands, I. Corpus de la Peinture des Anciens Pays-Bas au Quinzième Siècle*, 1), 2d edition, Antwerp, 1959, pp. 66-67 and 78.
10. See Friedländer, IX, No. 173 (Madrid, Collection of the Conde d'Almenas); now in the collection of the Marques de Santo-Domingo, Madrid.
11. See Friedländer, XI, No. 201.
12. Now in the *Stedelijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten* (Groeninge Museum).
13. The fragment formerly in the Trivulzio Collection in Milan has been transferred to the Museo Civico in Turin as a substitute for the part of the Book of Hours burned in 1904. See p. 103.
14. Now in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris, N.a.l. 3093.
15. Now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fletcher Fund), New York (see p. 103), No. 33.92. A and B.
16. Now in the *Museum Boymans-van Beuningen*, Rotterdam, No. 2449.
17. Afterwards in the Heinemann Collection, Munich (present location not ascertainable; probably entered the United States before World War II).
18. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-Dahlem.
19. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-Dahlem.
20. See Friedländer, IV, No. 37.
21. See Friedländer, VIII, No. 3.
22. See Addenda, p. 107.
23. The Giorgio Franchetti Gallery in the Cà d'Oro.
24. The portrait of Albergati is in fact seen in an early painting by David Teniers II, showing the gallery of an art collector. In this painting the owner is shown pointing to the portrait which is in the foreground. Teniers was later appointed curator of the art gallery of the Archduke. See Addenda, p. 107.
25. Now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Bucharest.
26. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-Dahlem.
27. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-Dahlem.
28. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-Dahlem.
29. Now in the Maria Neuerburg collection, Mehlheim am Rhein (69 x 61 cm).
30. Now in the Kunstmuseum, Basle.
31. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-Dahlem.
32. In the original edition: 523-, a misprint for 523c.
33. Cf. Friedländer, IX, No. 65 a, b, c, d. The Friedsam painting is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, No. 32.100.57.
34. Now in the Frick Collection, New York.
35. The dimensions of the painted surface are: 47.3 x 61.3 cm.
36. An inscription has been discovered on the frame of the central panel: · Johannes D· eyck me fecit et complevit Anno D· MCCCCXXXVII· als ·ixh· xan·. See H. Menz, 'Zur Freilegung einer Inschrift auf dem Eyck-Altar der Dresdener Gemäldegalerie', in *Jahrbuch 1959. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden* (1961), pp. 28-29, ill.
37. In the original edition: *dispositionen*, a misprint for *dispositionem*.
38. In 1937 in the Mellon Collection, Washington (see p. 103). Now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, No. 39.
39. In 1937 in a private collection in Paris (see p. 103). Now at Warwick Castle, Great Britain.
40. The overpainting of the donor's head discussed here has since been removed.
41. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-

- Dahlem, No. 528 c.
42. Present location unknown.
 43. Now in the collection of Mrs. S. Mary van Berg, New York.
 44. See Friedländer, VII, No. 63.
 45. Now in the collection of Miss J. Swinburne, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
 46. Sold at Helbing's, Munich, on 3rd March 1906; 39.5 × 28.5 cm.
 47. In the original edition, the words *right* and *left* were here interchanged, either by oversight or misprint.
 48. Now in the *Museum der Bildenden Künste*, Leipzig.
 49. Now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, No. 43.95.
 50. Disappeared in 1929.
 51. In the original edition: 1525, a misprint for 1425.
 52. In 1937 in the Bache Collection, New York; dated 1446, not 1466, 29 × 21 cm, (see p. 104). Now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, No. L.44.23.19.
 53. In 1937 in Lugano, Schloss Rohoncz Collection (Baron Thyssen) (see p. 104). Now in the collection Bentinck Thyssen, Paris.
 54. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-Dahlem.
 55. In 1937 in the R. Timken Collection, New York (see p. 104). Now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, No. 60.71.1.
 56. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-Dahlem.
 57. Destroyed during the siege of Berlin in 1945.
 58. Now in the Wildenstein Gallery, New York.
 59. Present location unknown.
 60. Present location unknown.
 61. Now in the *Musée du Louvre*, Paris, No. R.F.1951.45.
 62. The added arched top has been removed. See H. Adhémar, 'Le Musée National du Louvre. Paris' (*Les Primitifs Flamands, I. Corpus de la Peinture des Anciens Pays-Bas Méridionaux au Quinzième Siècle* 5), Brussels, 1962, p. 69.
 63. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-Dahlem.
 64. In 1937 in the collection of Dr. Fritz Thyssen, Mülheim-on-the-Rhine (see p. 104). Now in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection (Schloss Rohoncz Foundation), Lugano.
 65. See addenda, p. 107.
 66. In 1937 in the Museum in Dessau (see p. 104). Destroyed during World War II.
 67. In 1937 in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Friedsam Collection), New York (see p. 104). No. 32.100.35.
 68. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-Dahlem.
 69. Now in the *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Bode-Museum*, Berlin (East), No. 551.
 70. Now in the *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*, Berlin-Dahlem.
 71. See Friedländer, III, No. 35.
 72. Now in the E. Proehl collection, Amsterdam.
 73. Now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, No. 39.
 74. See Note 39.
 75. Destroyed.
 76. Now in the *Museum Boymans-van Beuningen*.
 77. Now in the National Gallery of Art, Mellon collection, Washington, No. 40.
 78. Now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington (Kress Foundation, No. 75).
 79. Now in the County Museum of Art, Los Angeles (Balch collection), No. L.2100.44-1074. The statement that the painting was in the Mellon collection seems erroneous.
 80. See p. 100 in the present volume.
 81. See p. 101 in the present volume.
 82. Friedländer confirmed his opinion the following year, with the same reservations, in 'The Literature of Art. [Review of] Hubert Van Eyck. By Ottmar Kerber (...), Frankfort-on-Main...' in *The Burlington Magazine*, LXXII, 1938, p. 148. On his part, Renders reaffirmed his theory in 1950: *Jean van Eyck et le Polyptyque; Deux Problèmes Résolus*, Brussels, 1950.
 83. J. Lavallee, 'La Peinture et l'Enluminure des Origines à la Fin du XVe Siècle,' in *L'Art en Belgique du Moyen Age à Nos Jours* (ed. by P. Fierens), Brussels, (1938), pp. 107-122. In a second (1947) and in a third edition (1959), the author expresses the same point of view.
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124. See Notes 103 and 106 (pp. 308-313 and passim).

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- , Robert de Rothschild collection
 J.E. *The Virgin and Child with St. Barbara, St. Elizabeth(?) and a Donor*, see NEW YORK, The Frick Collection
- , F. Kleinberger collection
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- , Count L. Paar Auction, 1886
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- WARWICK CASTLE (Great Britain)
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PHOTOGRAPHS

Unless listed below, photos were supplied by the museums, institutions or collectors owning the works.

A. C. L., Brussels: Plates 1-16, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 36, 37B, 39B, 40, 41, 45B, 49A, 50B, 51, 56A, 56B, 61B, 61C, 61D, 61F, 63B, 63D, 68A, 80, 85, 93, 94, 103, 105, 108A, 109. Alinari, Florence: Plates 39A, 70C. P. Bijtebier, Brussels: Plate 48. Brunel, Lugano: Plate 87. G. Busch-Hauck, Frankfurt: Plates 52, 78. Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden: Plate 45A. A. Frequin, The Hague: Plates 37A, 71C, 98, 101A, 101B. Studio Harcourt, Paris: Plate 76. Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, Marburg/Lahn: Plate 92.

Foto Mas, Barcelona: Plate 107A. Pando, Madrid: Plate 89. Pfauder, Dresden: Plates 54, 55. Rampazzi, Turin: Plates 33, 34, 35, 42, 43. Ressegueie, Montauban: Plate 60. Rheinisches Bildarchiv, Cologne: Plate 49B. John D. Schiff, New York: Plate 62B. W. Steinkopf, Berlin-Dahlem: Plates 47, 63C, 68C, 77A, 77B, 86, 96A, 97B. John F. Wagaman, La Jolla (Calif.): Plate 111. Wildenstein & Co., Inc., New York: Plate 82.



Ghent altarpiece, open

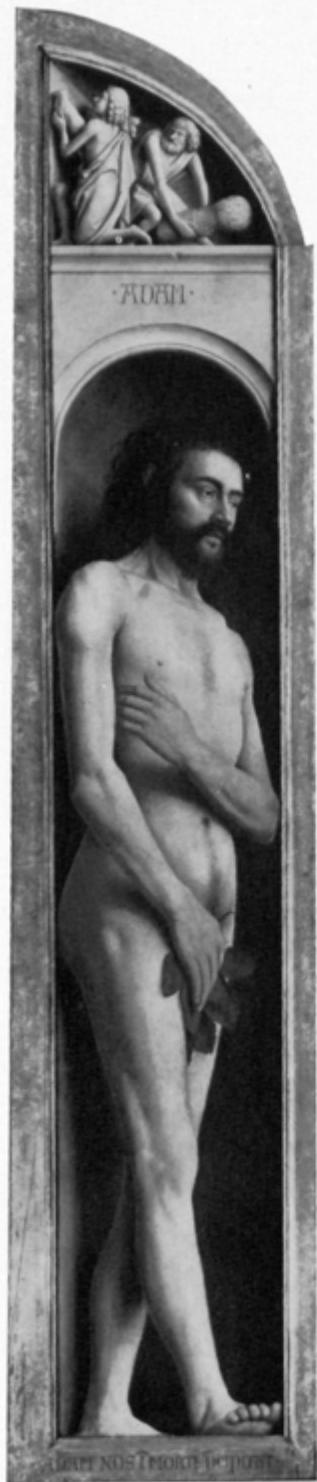


Ghent altarpiece



Plate

4



Ghent altarpiece

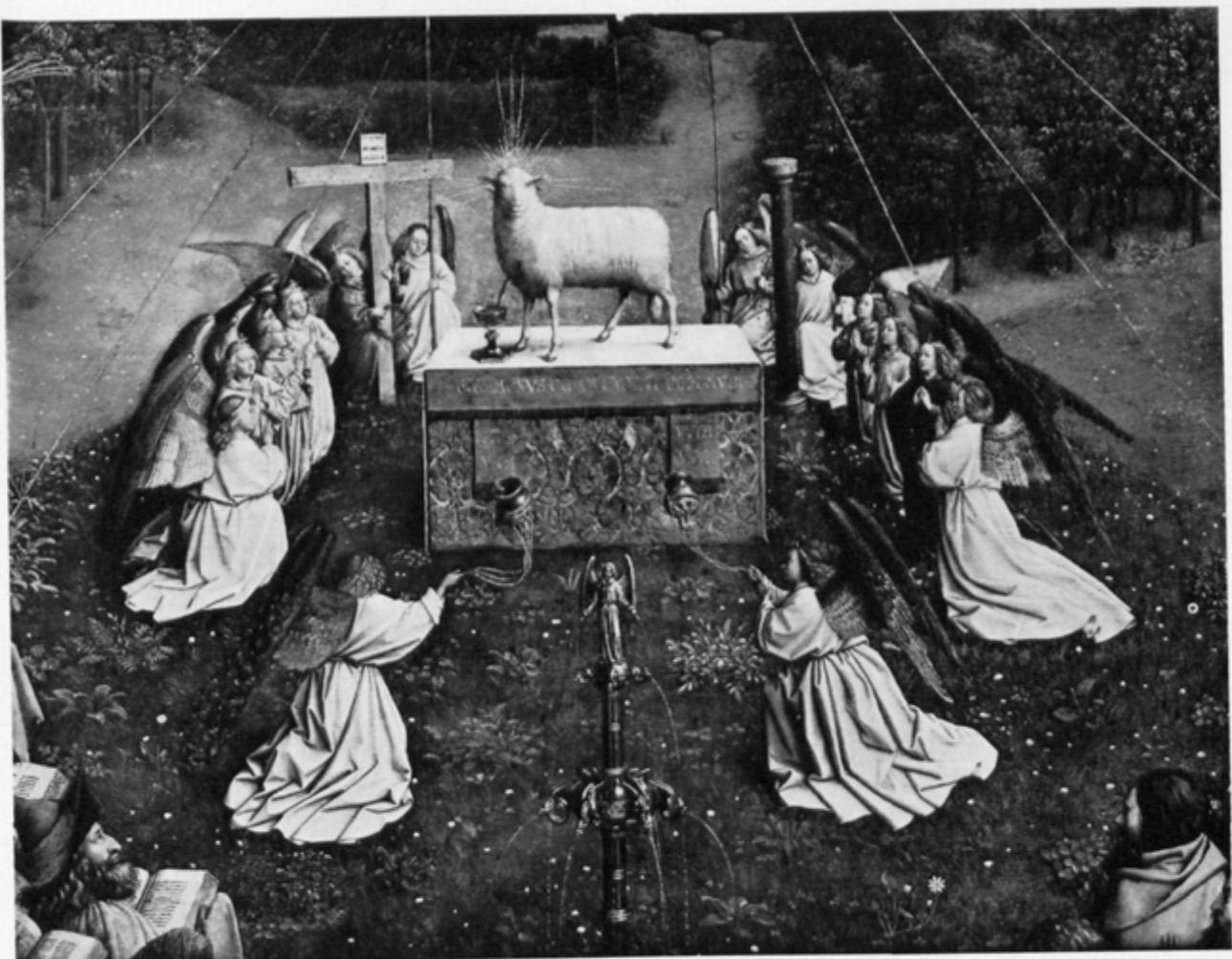


Ghent altarpiece

Plate
6



Ghent altarpiece



Detail of Plate 6

Plate
8



Ghent altarpiece



Ghent altarpiece



Detail of Plate 8



Ghent altarpiece, closed



Ghent altarpiece



Ghent altarpiece



Ghent altarpiece

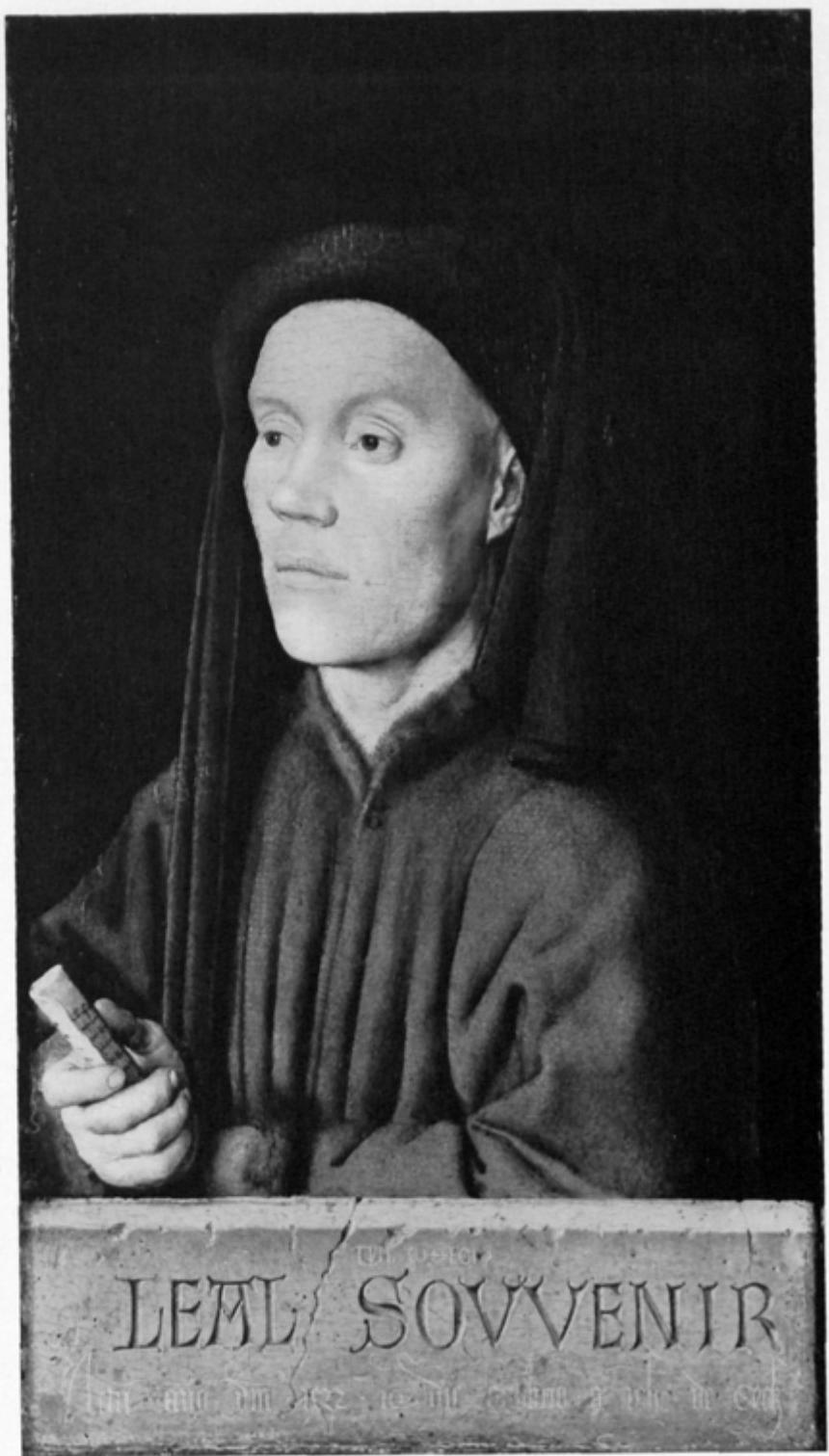


Ghent altarpiece

Plate
16



Ghent altarpiece, details of Plates 12 and 13



Jan van Eyck. Portrait of the so-called Tymotheos. London, National Gallery



Jan van Eyck. Portrait of a Man with a Turban. London, National Gallery



Jan van Eyck. Virgin and Child. Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria



Jan van Eyck. Double Portrait of Giovanni Arnolfini and his Wife. London, National Gallery



Detail of Plate 20



Plate

22

Jan van Eyck. Portrait of Jan de Leeuw. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum



Jan van Eyck. Virgin and Child with St. Donatian, St. George and Canon van der Paele. Bruges, Stedelijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten (Groeninge Museum)

Plate
24



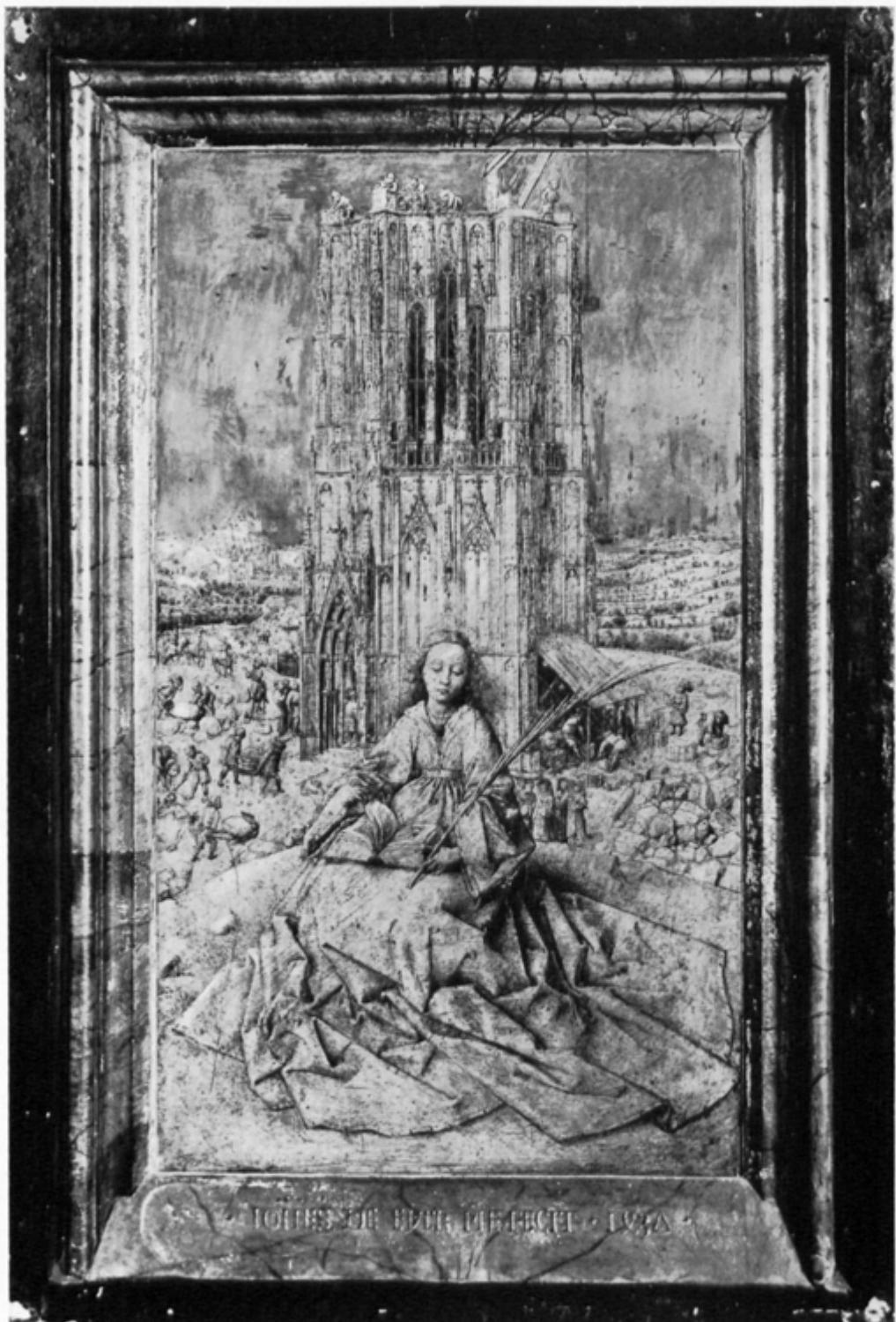
Detail of Plate 23



Detail of Plate 23

Plate

26



Jan van Eyck. St. Barbara. Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten



Jan van Eyck. Virgin and Child by the Fountain. Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten

Plate

28



Jan van Eyck. Portrait of Margaret, the Painter's Wife. Bruges, Stedelijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten (Groeninge Museum)



From the Heures de Turin-Milan. The Kiss of Judas



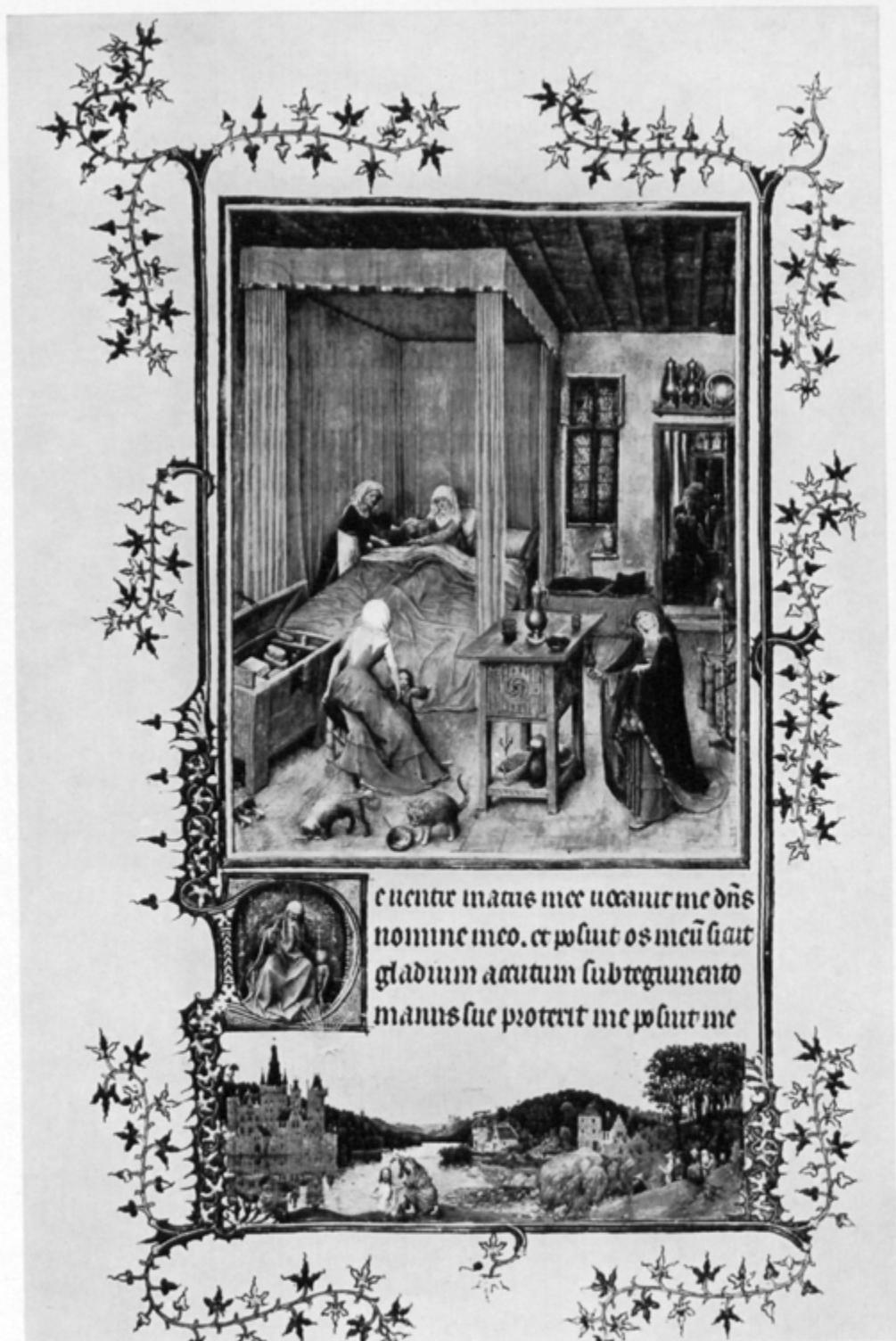
From the Heures de Turin-Milan. Sts. Julian and Martha in a Sailboat



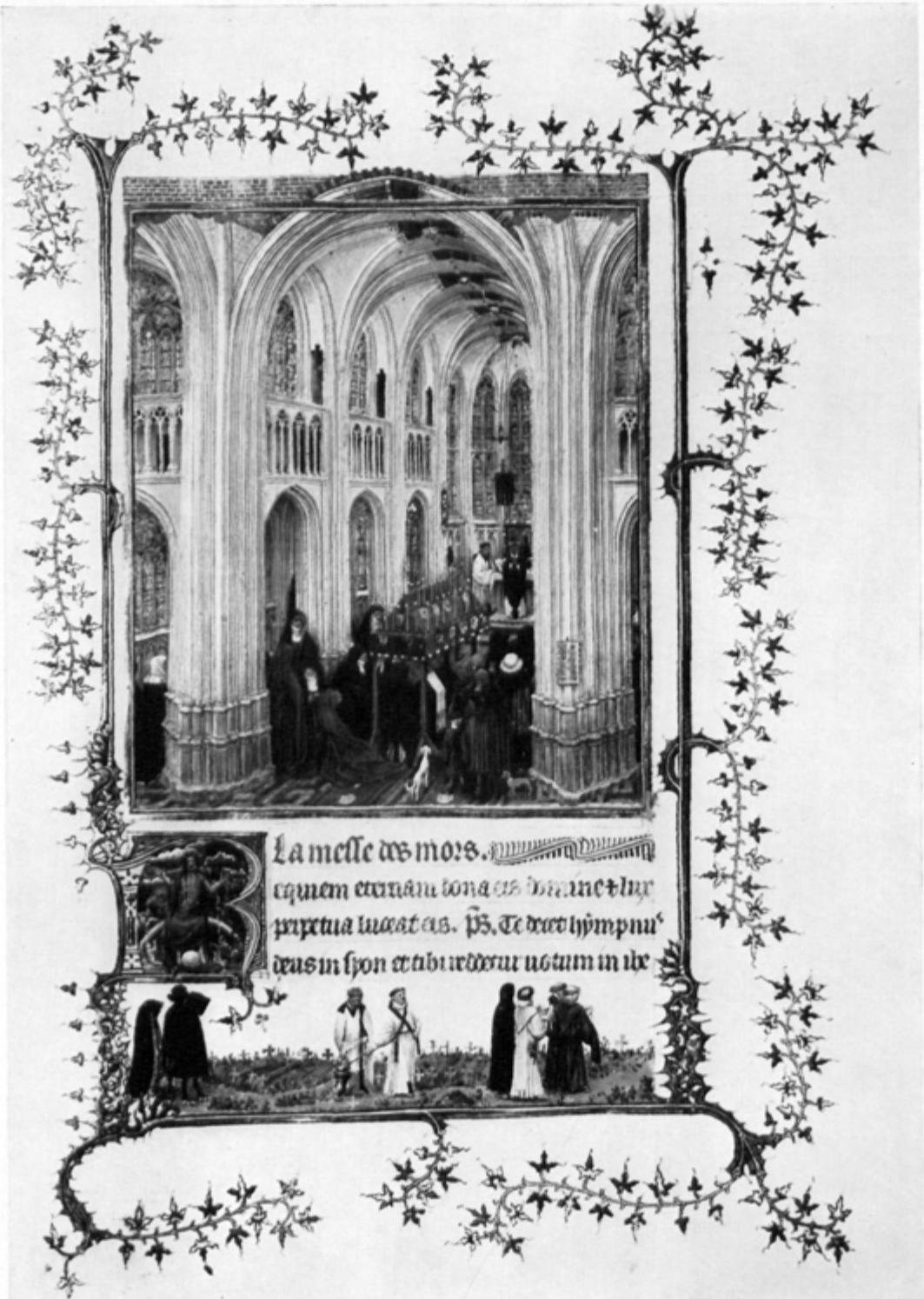
From the Heures de Turin-Milan. Virgin with Many Female Saints



From the Heures de Turin-Milan. Count William by the Seashore



From the Heures de Turin-Milan. The Birth of St. John. Turin, Museo Civico



From the Heures de Turin-Milan. The Mass for the Dead. Turin, Museo Civico



From the Heures de Turin-Milan. The Finding of the True Cross. Turin, Museo Civico

Plate
36



Jan van Eyck. The Crucifixion and the Last Judgment, two altar wings. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund

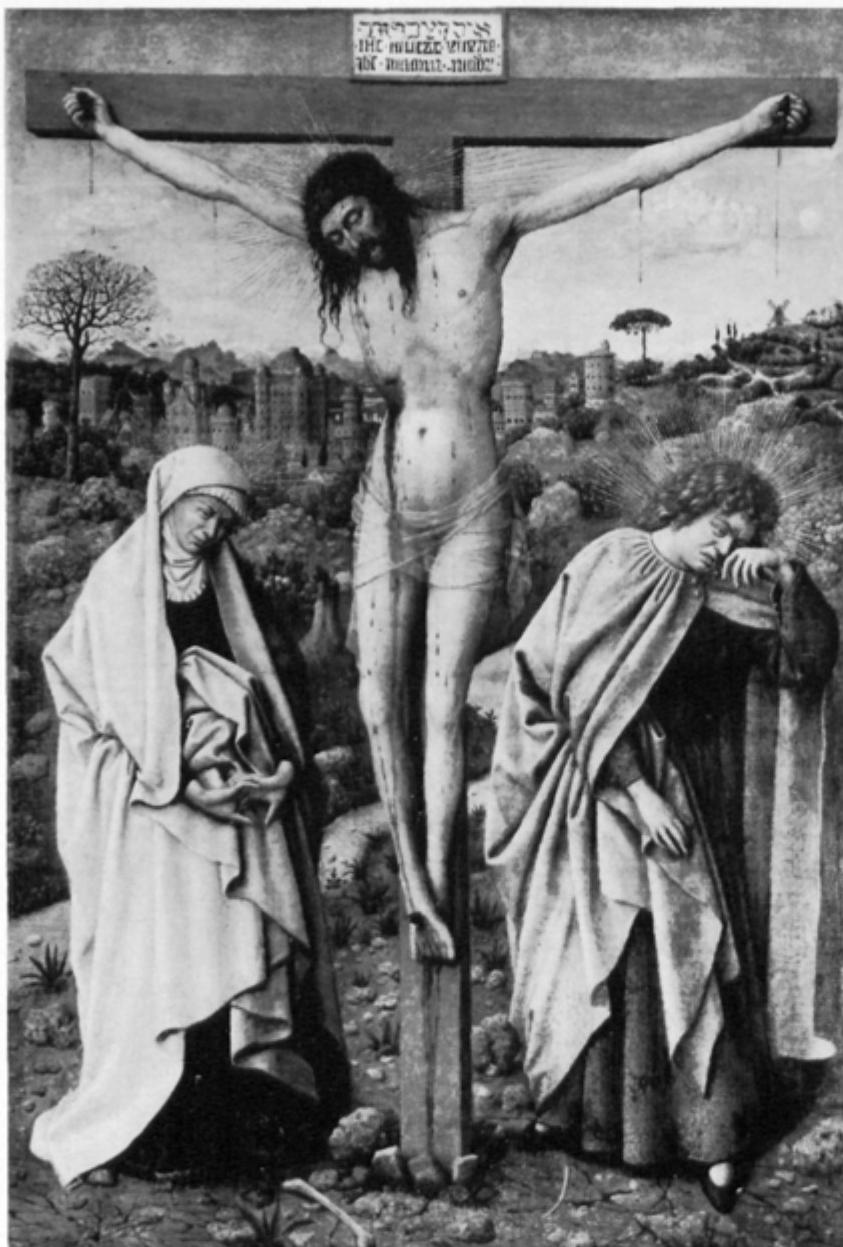


A

B

A. Jan van Eyck. The Three Marys at the Tomb. Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen
B. The Resurrection

Plate
38



A | B

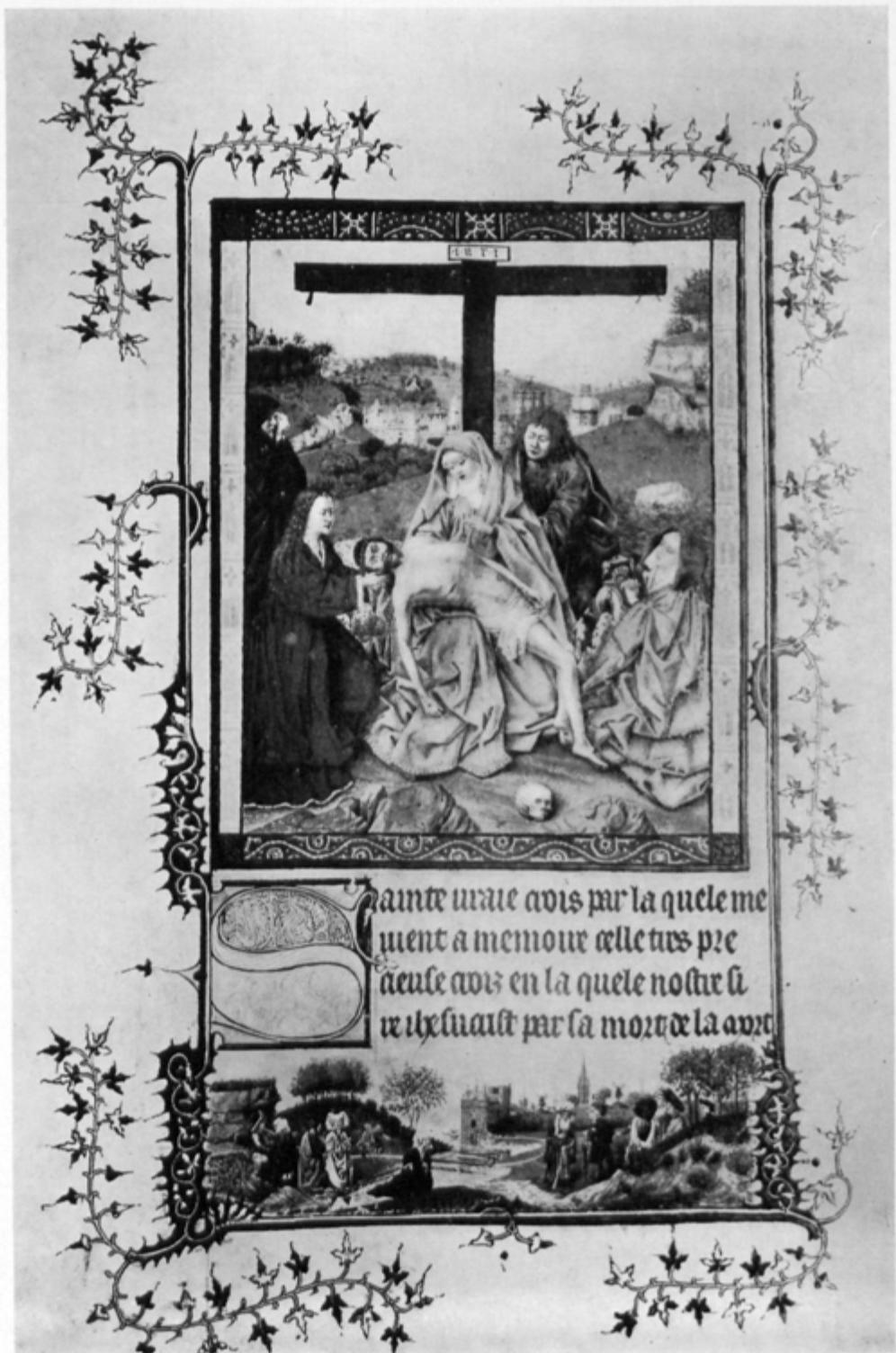
A. Jan van Eyck. The Crucifixion with Mary and St. John. Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen.
B. The Crucifixion. Venice, Cà d'Oro, Giorgio Franchetti Gallery



Jan van Eyck. The Virgin in the Church. Berlin-Dahlem,
Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen



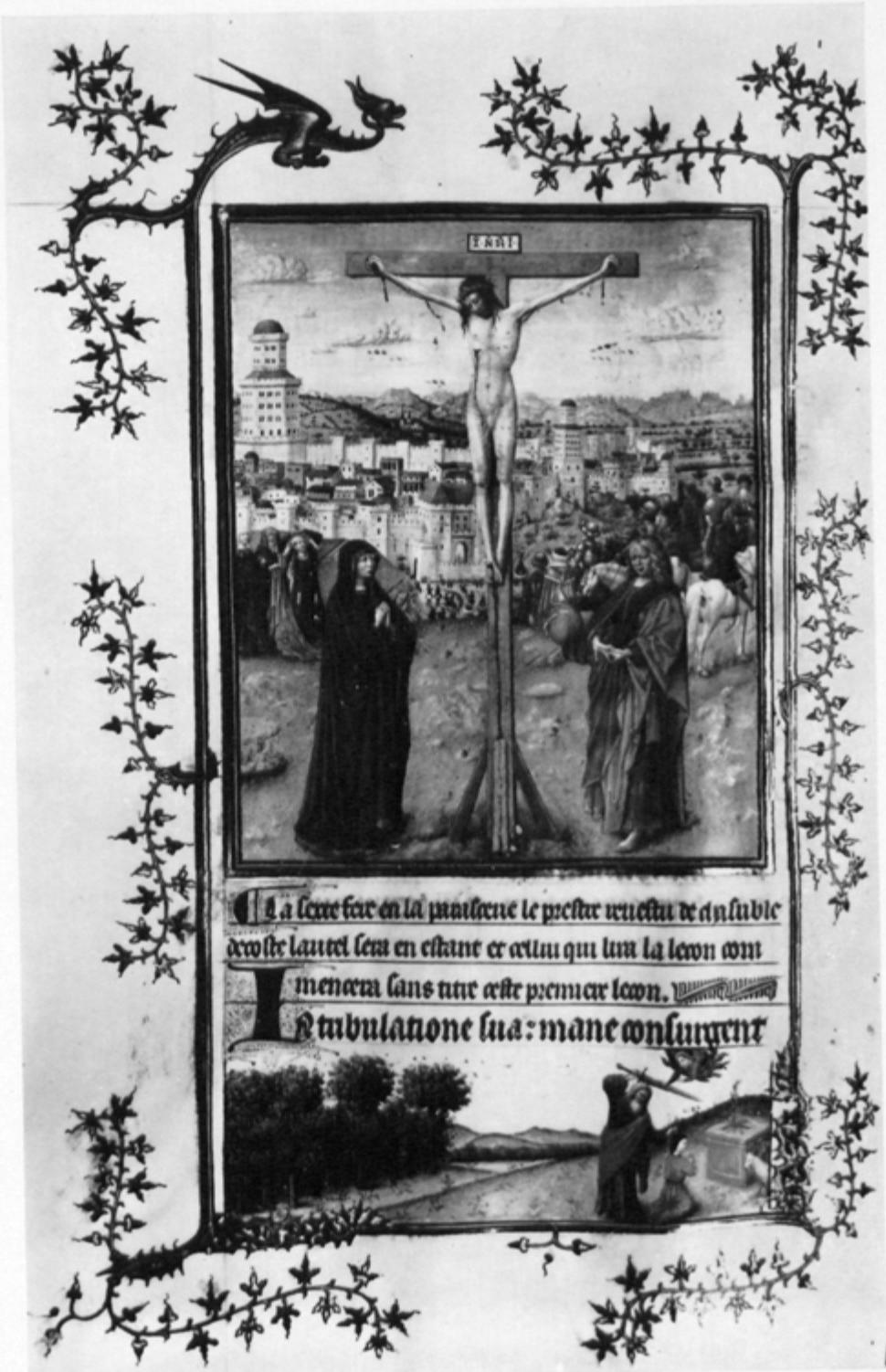
From the Heures de Turin-Milan. God the Father



From the Heures de Turin-Milan. The Lamentation



From the Heures de Turin-Milan. The Agony in the Garden. *Turin, Museo Civico*



From the Heures de Turin-Milan. The Crucifixion. Turin, Museo Civico



Jan van Eyck. Portrait of a Cardinal. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

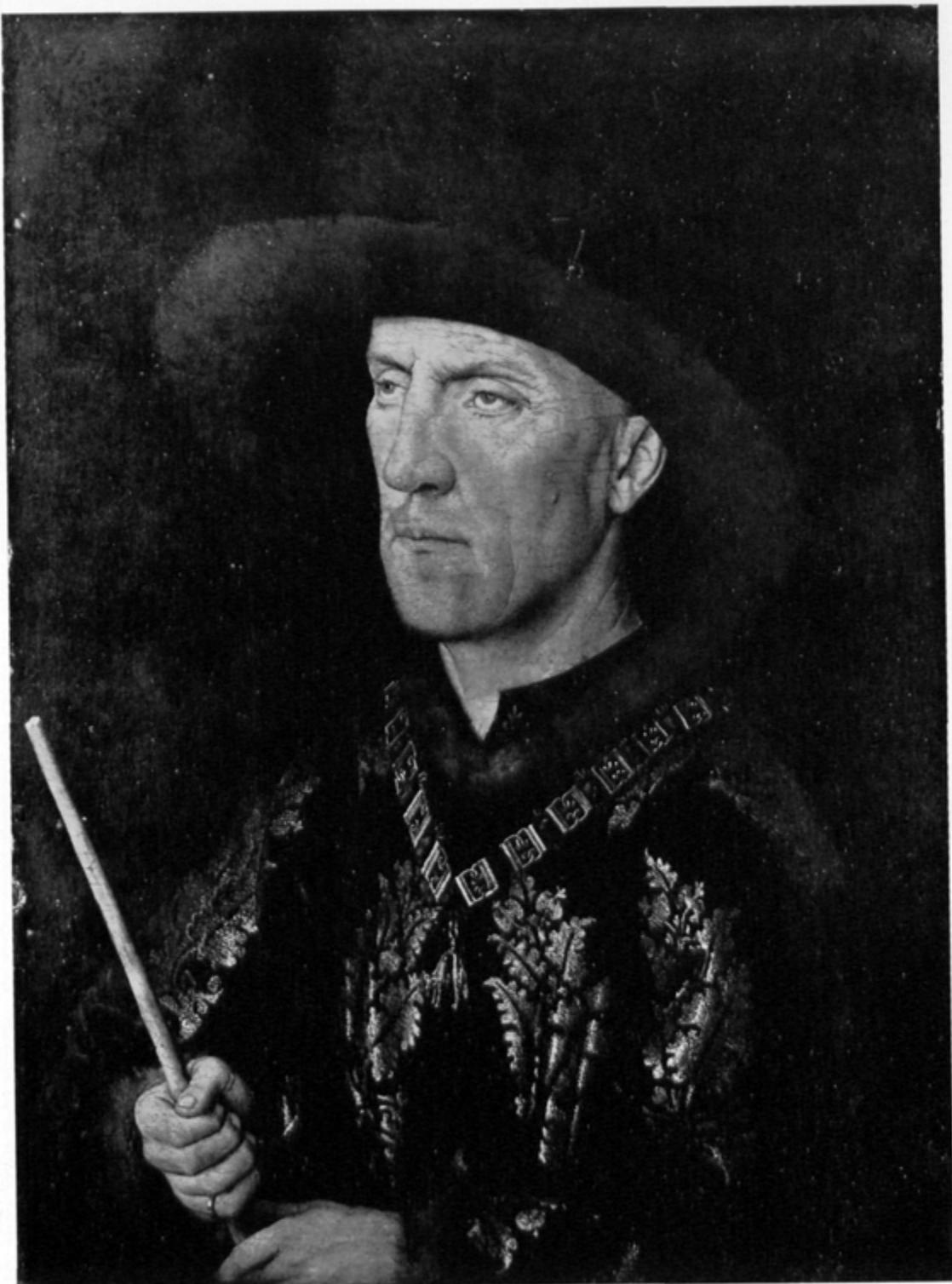


A. Jan van Eyck. Portrait of a Cardinal. Drawing. Dresden,
B. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen. B. David Teniers II. The Gallery of
an Art Collector. Detail with the Portrait of Cardinal Albergati.
London, Count A. Seilern Collection

Plate
46



Jan van Eyck. Portrait of a Man. Bucharest, Museum of Fine Arts

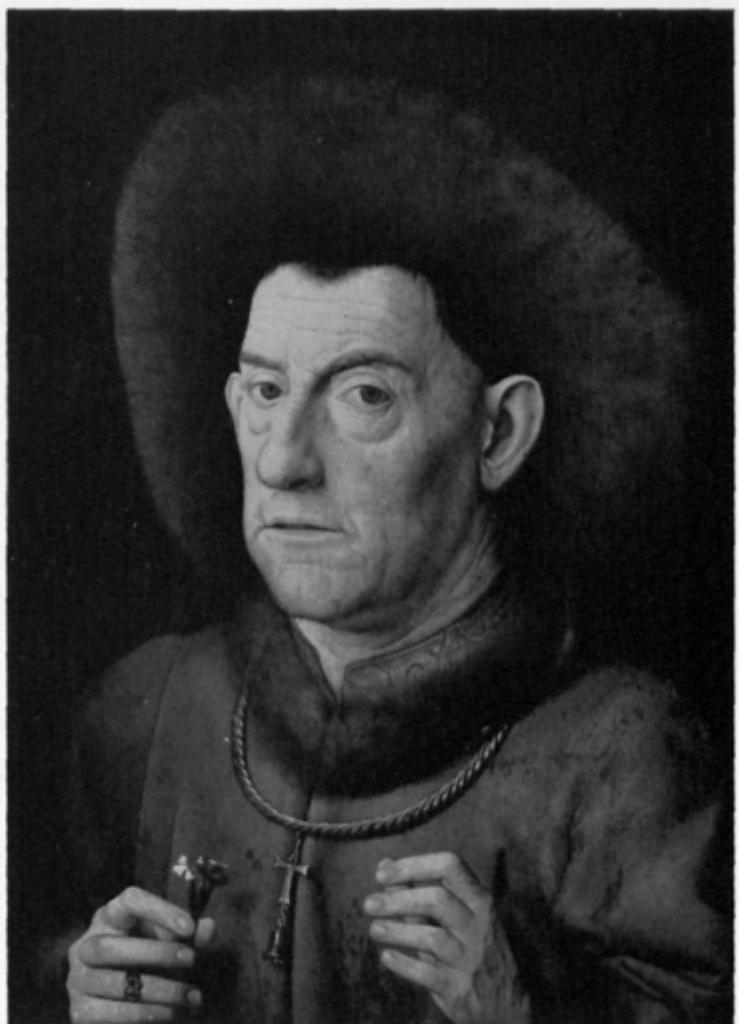


Jan van Eyck. Portrait of Baudouin de Lannoy. Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen

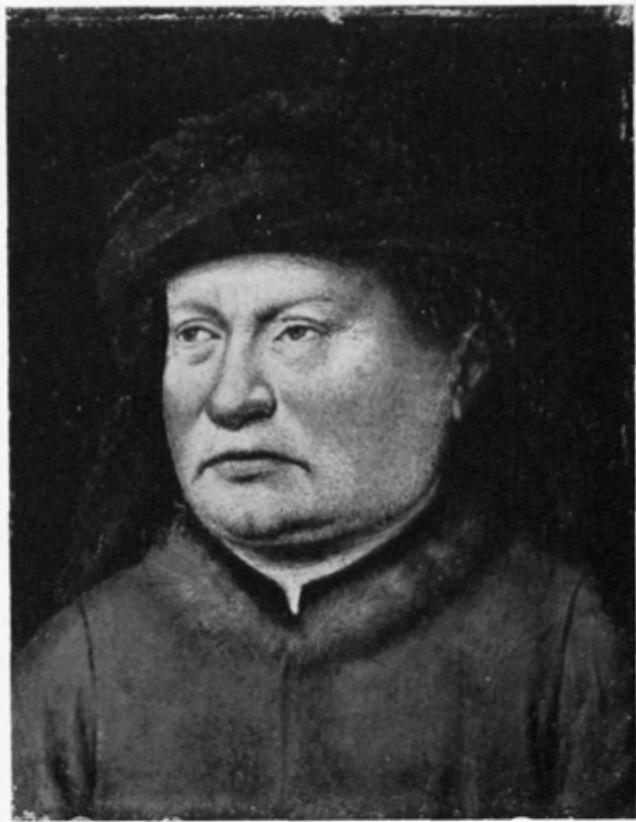
Plate
48



Jan van Eyck. Portrait of Giovanni Arnolfini. Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen



A. Jan van Eyck. Man with the Pinks. Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen. b. Master of the Aachen Altarpiece. Adoration of the Magi. Detail. Mehlem am Rhein, Maria Neuerburg Collection. c. Barthel Bruyn. Adoration of the Magi, Triptych. Detail. Basle, Kunstmuseum



A | B

A. Jan van Eyck. A Donor. Leipzig, *Museum der Bildenden Künste*. B. Jan van Eyck. Portrait of a Man. Berlin-Dahlem, *Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen*



Jan van Eyck. Virgin and Child with Chancellor Rolin. Paris, Musée du Louvre



Jan van Eyck. The Lucca Madonna. Frankfurt, Städelisches Kunstinstitut



Jan van Eyck. Virgin and Child with St. Barbara, St. Elisabeth (?) and a Donor. New York, The Frick Collection

Plate
54



Jan van Eyck. Triptych. Archangel and Donor. Virgin and Child. St. Catherine. Wings (exterior): The Annunciation. Dresden, *Staatliche Kunstsammlungen*



Jan van Eyck. Triptych. Centre-panel. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen



A
—
B

A. Jan van Eyck. The Stigmatization of St. Francis. *Turin, Galleria Sabauda*. B. Jan van Eyck. The Stigmatization of St. Francis. *Philadelphia, The John G. Johnson Collection*



Jan van Eyck. *The Annunciation*. Washington, National Gallery of Art, Andrew Mellon Collection



Jan van Eyck. The van Maelbeke altarpiece. Centre-panel. *Warwick Castle*



A
B | C

A. The van Maelbeke altarpiece. Wings. *Warwick Castle*. b. After the centre-panel of the van Maelbeke altarpiece. Drawing. Vienna, Graphische Sammlung Albertina. c. After the centre-panel of the van Maelbeke altarpiece. Drawing. Nürnberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum

Plate
60



Jan van Eyck. Portrait of a Cleric. Montauban, Musée Ingres



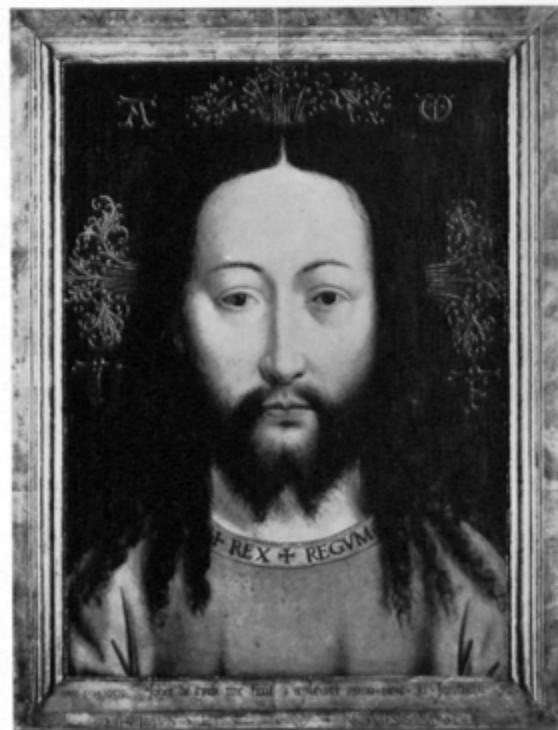
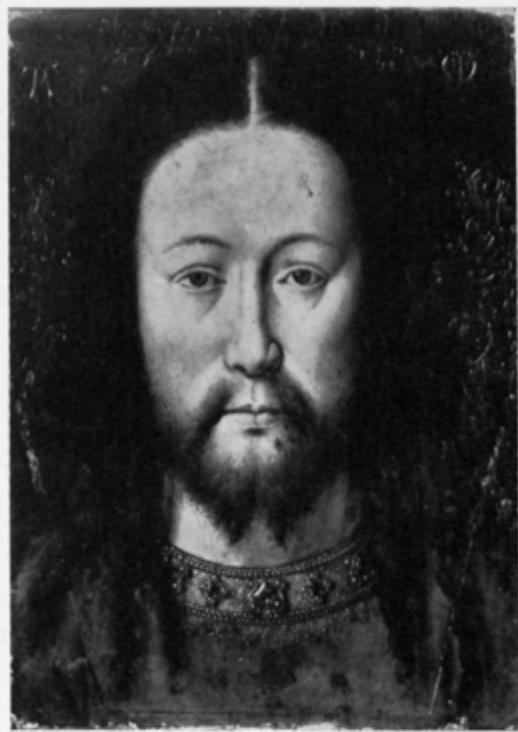
A | B | C
D | E | F
| G

A. Portrait of Isabella of Portugal. Drawing. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, Cabinet des Manuscrits. B. Portrait of Bonne d'Artois. Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen. c. Portrait of Bonne d'Artois. Drawing. Arras, Bibliothèque Municipale. d. Portrait of Jeanne de Prelle. Drawing. Arras, Bibliothèque Municipale. e. Portrait of Jacqueline of Bavaria. Frankfurt, Städelisches Kunstinstitut. f. Portrait of Jacqueline of Bavaria. Drawing. Arras, Bibliothèque Municipale. g. Portrait of Jacqueline of Bavaria. Copenhagen, National Museum of Art



A | B

- A. Willem van Haecht. The Gallery of Cornelis van der Geest. Detail. New York, Mrs. S. Mary van Berg collection.
B. Willem van Haecht. The Gallery of Cornelis van der Geest. Detail : van Eyck's painting. New York, Mrs. S. Mary van Berg collection



A | B
—
C | D

Jan van Eyck (?). Heads of Christ. A. Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen. B. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Miss J. Swinburne collection. C. Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen. D. Bruges, Stedelijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten (Groeninge Museum)



After van Eyck. The so-called Fountain of Life. Madrid, Museo del Prado



A
B | C

A. Early Eyckian Style. Christ carrying the Cross. Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts. B. After van Eyck. Group of Jews. Drawing. Leipzig, Museum der Bildenden Künste. c. After van Eyck. Group of Riders. Drawing. Brunswick, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum



Jan van Eyck. The Man with a Falcon. Drawing. Frankfurt, Städelisches Kunstinstitut



A | B
C | D | E

Eyckian style. Drawings. A. Portrait of Jacqueline of Bavaria. Frankfurt, Städelisches Kunstinstitut. B. Portrait of a Man in Half-Length. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. C. Portrait of a Man. London, British Museum. D. Virgin and Child. Berlin-Dahlem, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett. E. The Angel of the Annunciation. Berlin-Dahlem, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett



A | B

C | D

Eyckian style. Drawings. A. St. Christopher. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. B. The Adoration of the Magi. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet. c. The Adoration of the Magi. Berlin-Dahlem, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett. d. Apostle. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library



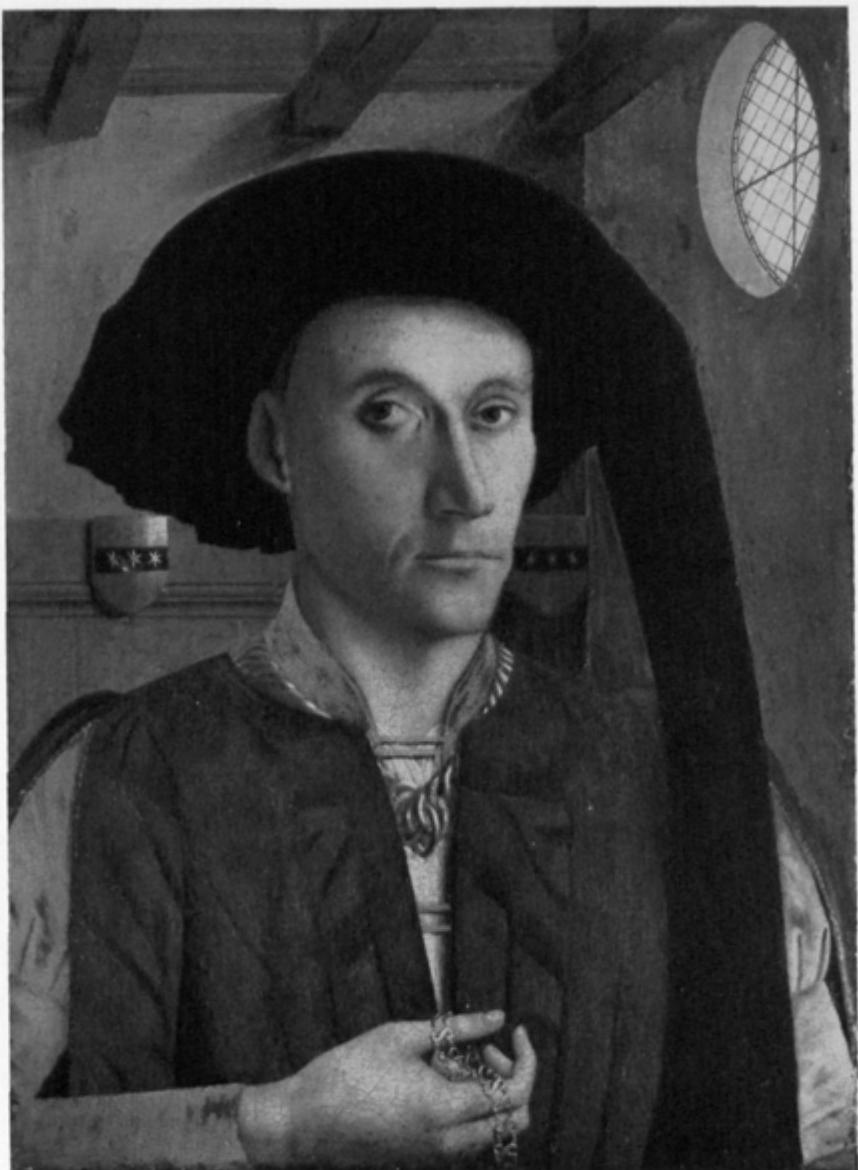


A | B
—
C

Eyckian style. Drawings : A. The Annunciation. *Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August-Bibliothek.* B. The Coronation of the Virgin. *Vienna, Graphische Sammlung Albertina.* c. Two Female Heads, *Turin*



A | B Eyckian style. A. Drawings : Portrait of a Goldsmith. Berlin-Dahlem, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett. B. Portrait of a Man in Half-Length. Berlin-Dahlem, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett.
C | D c. Portrait of a Lady. Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen. d. Jael and Sisera. Brunswick, Herzog Anton-Ulrich-Museum



Petrus Christus. Portrait of Edward Grymeston. *London, National Gallery.* With back.

Plate
74



Petrus Christus. Portrait of a Carthusian. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jules S. Bache Collection



Petrus Christus. St. Eloy. New York, Lehman Collection

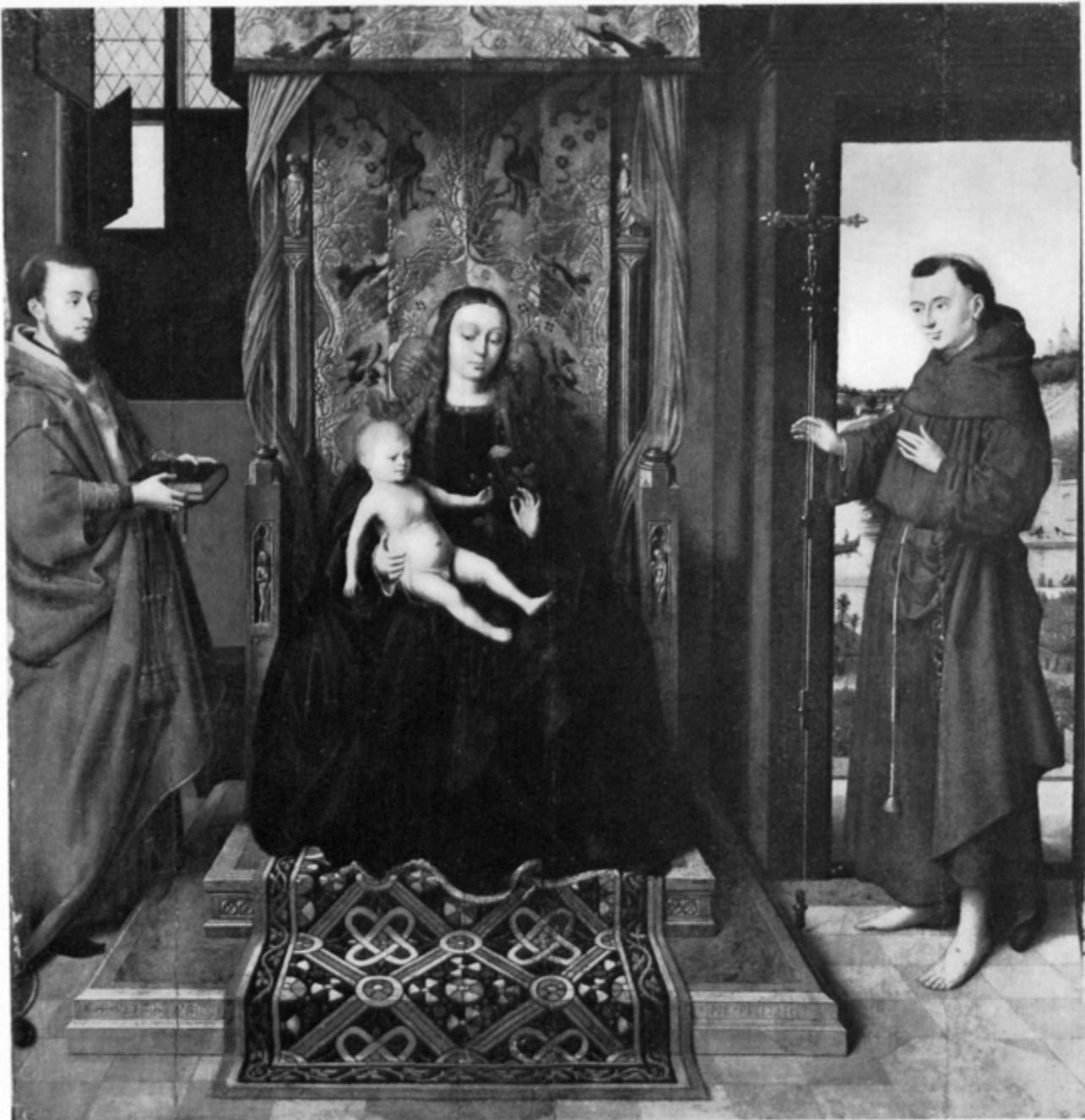


Petrus Christus. Madonna in Half-Length. Paris, Bentinck Thyssen collection



A | B

Petrus Christus. Two altar wings : A. The Last Judgment. B. The Annunciation (top) and the Nativity (below).
Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen



Petrus Christus. The Virgin Enthroned, with Sts. Jerome and Francis. Frankfurt, Städelisches Kunstinstitut



Petrus Christus. Head of Christ with the Crown of Thorns.
*New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Lillian S. Timken
Collection*



Petrus Christus. Portrait of a Lady in Fine Attire. Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen



Petrus Christus. Two altar wings: John the Baptist and St. Catherine (destroyed)



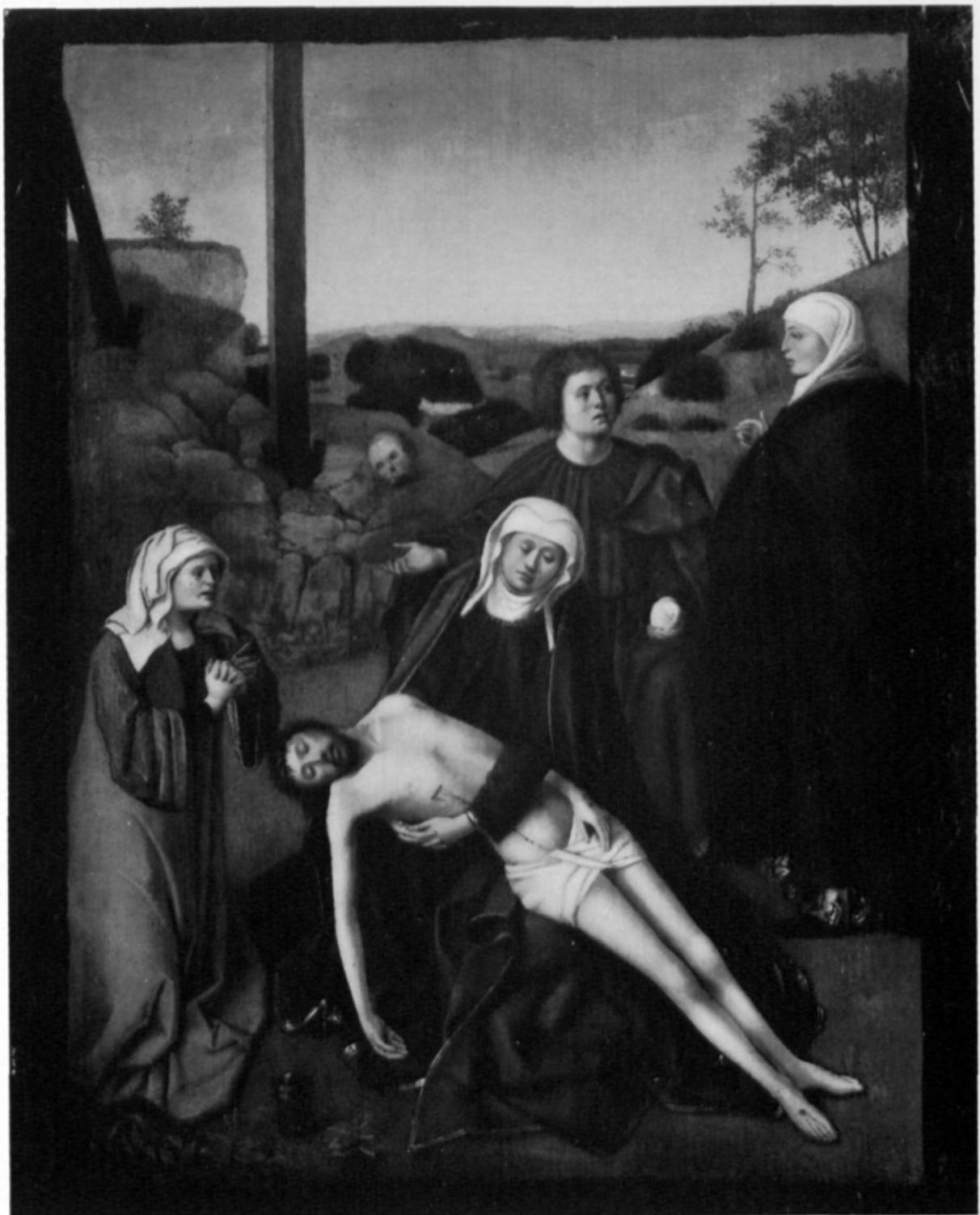
Petrus Christus. *The Nativity*. New York, Wildenstein & Co, Inc.



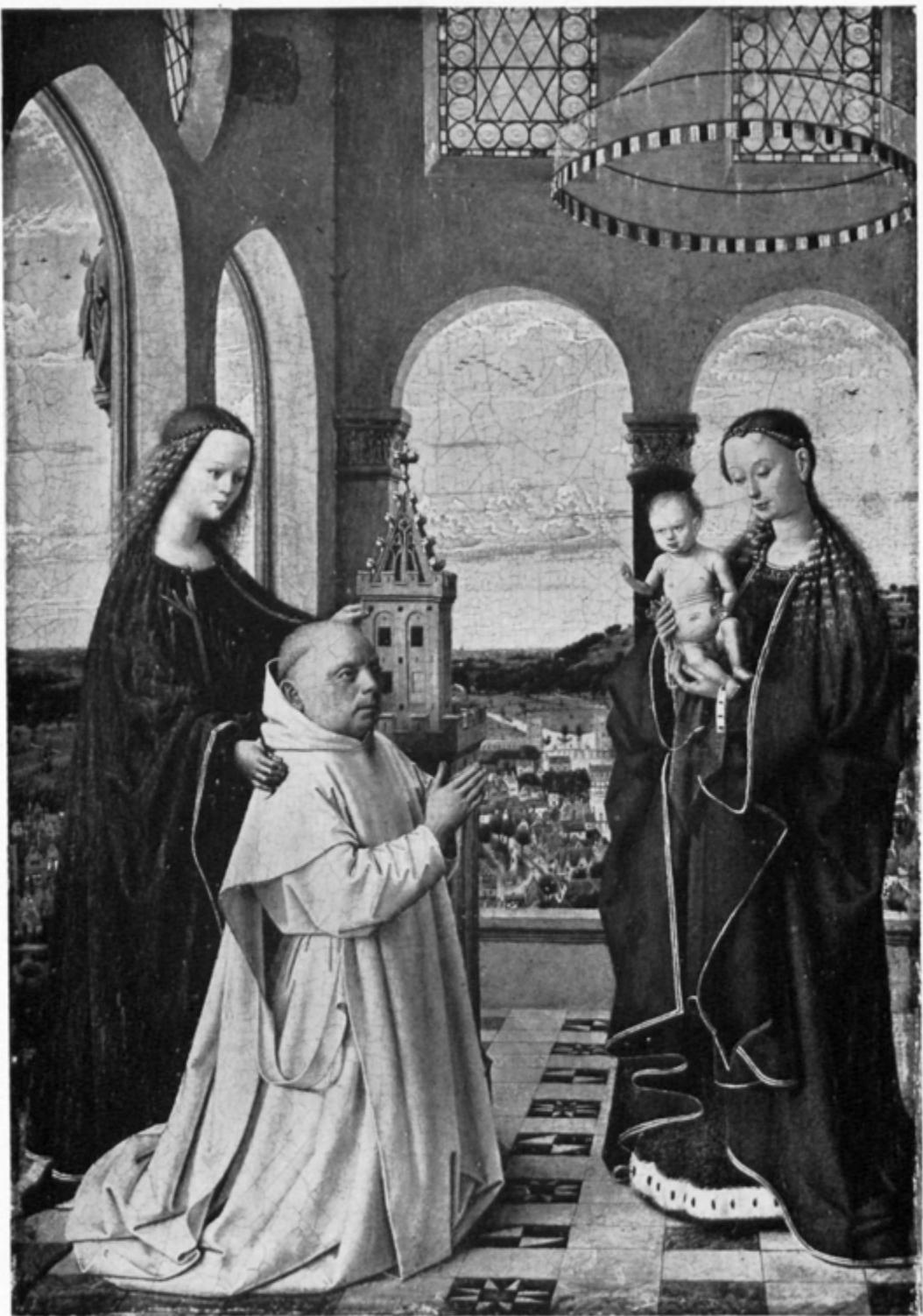
Petrus Christus. Virgin. Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts



Petrus Christus. The Lamentation. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gift of Henry G. Marquand



Petrus Christus. The Lamentation. Paris, Musée du Louvre



Petrus Christus. The Exeter Madonna. Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen



Petrus Christus. The Madonna of the Dry Tree. Lugano-Castagnola, Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection (Schloss Rohoncz Foundation)



Petrus Christus. Virgin and Child. Madrid, Museo del Prado



Petrus Christus. Virgin and Child. Madrid, Private collection

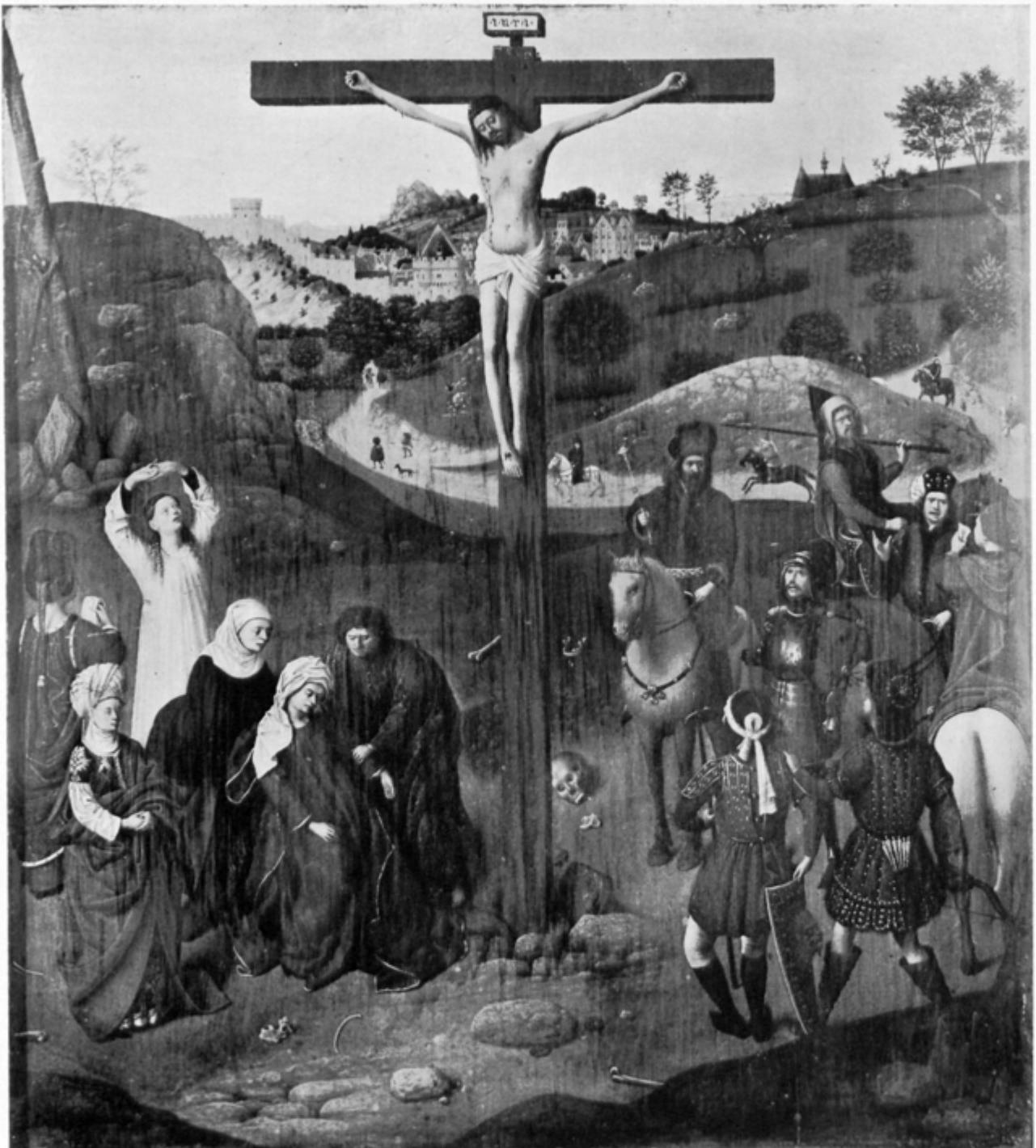


A | B

A. Petrus Christus. St. Anthony with a Donor. Copenhagen, National Museum of Art. B. Petrus Christus. Portrait of a Donor (fragment). Hanover, Niedersächsische Landesgalerie



Petrus Christus. Portrait of a Young Man. *London, National Gallery*



Petrus Christus. The Crucifixion (destroyed)



Petrus Christus. The Lamentation. Brussels, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique



Petrus Christus (?). Portrait of a Lady. New York, Lehman Collection

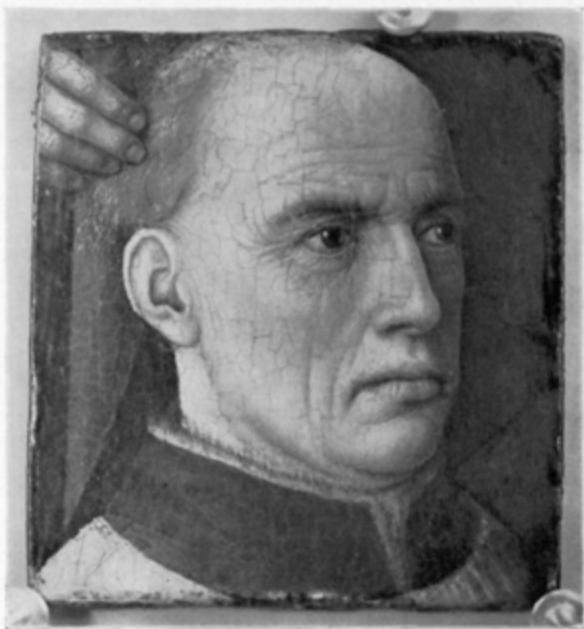


Petrus Christus (?). The Annunciation. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Michael Friedsam Collection



A | B

- A. Follower of Jan van Eyck. *The Virgin by the Fountain*. Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen.
B. Follower of Jan van Eyck. *Virgin and Child*. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gift of Henry G. Marquand



A | B
—
C

A. Follower of Jan van Eyck. Virgin and Child. Berlin (East), Staatliche Museen, Bode-Museum. B. Follower of Jan van Eyck. Portrait of a Young Man. Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen. c. Follower of Jan van Eyck. Portrait of a Donor. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan



Follower of Jan van Eyck. The Virgin with St. John the Baptist and St. Jerome. Amsterdam, E. Prochl collection



Jan van Eyck. The Annunciation. *Lugano-Castagnola, Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection (Schloss Rohoncz Foundation)*



A | B

Jan van Eyck. Drawings : A. Philip, Duke of Brabant. B. Philip, Count of Nevers (destroyed)



A | B

Jan van Eyck. Drawings : A. Louis, Duke of Savoy. B. John IV, Duke of Brabant. Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen



Petrus Christus. *The Nativity*. Washington, National Gallery of Art, Andrew Mellon Collection



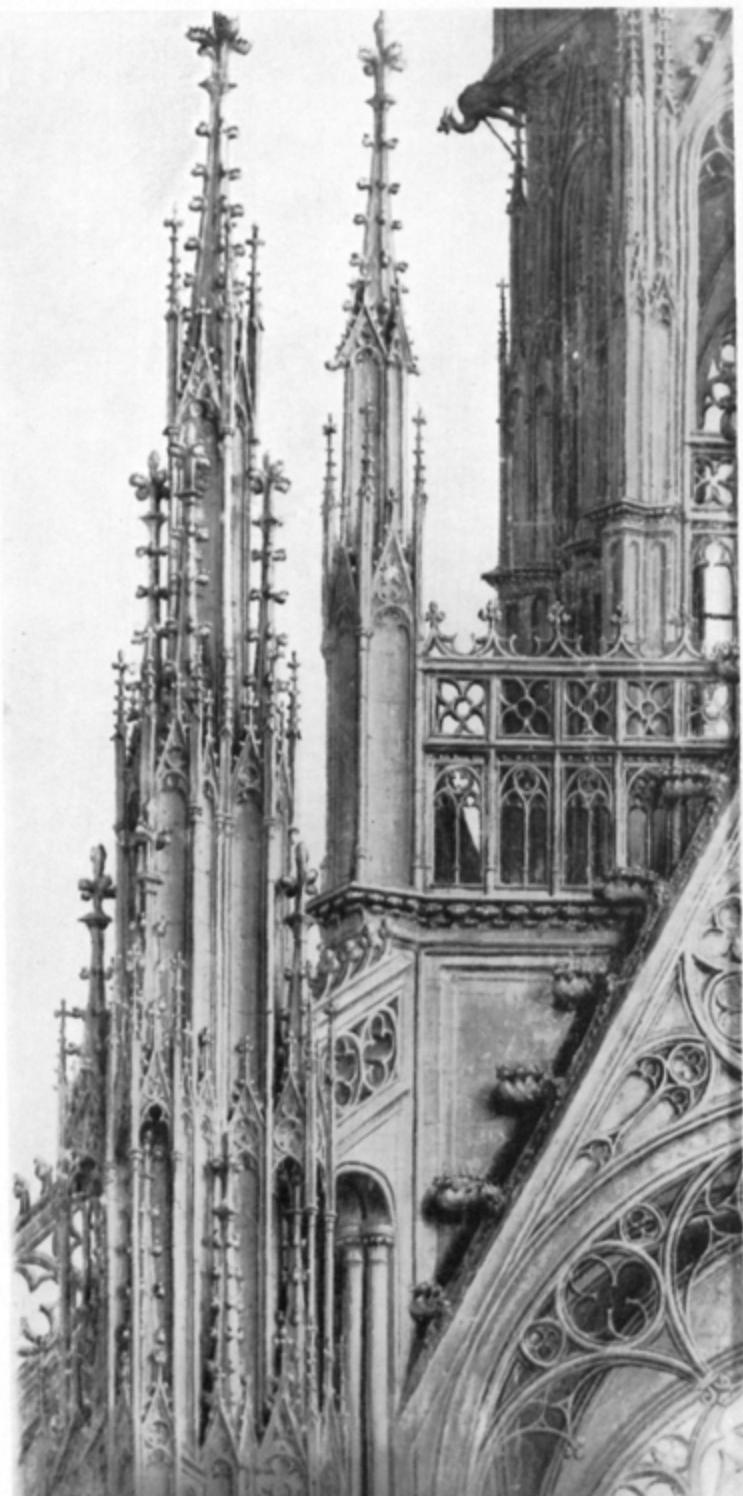
Petrus Christus. St. Jerome. *Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts*



Petrus Christus. Portraits of Donors. Washington, National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection



Petrus Christus. Portrait of a Man. *Los Angeles, County Museum of Art, Allan C. Balch Collection*



Jan van Eyck. Fragment with architectural detail. Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs



A | B

A. Jan van Eyck (Copy). The Virgin in the Church. Madrid, M. Bauzá de Rodriguez Collection. B. Follower of Jan van Eyck. Portrait of Marco Barbarigo. London, National Gallery



A | B

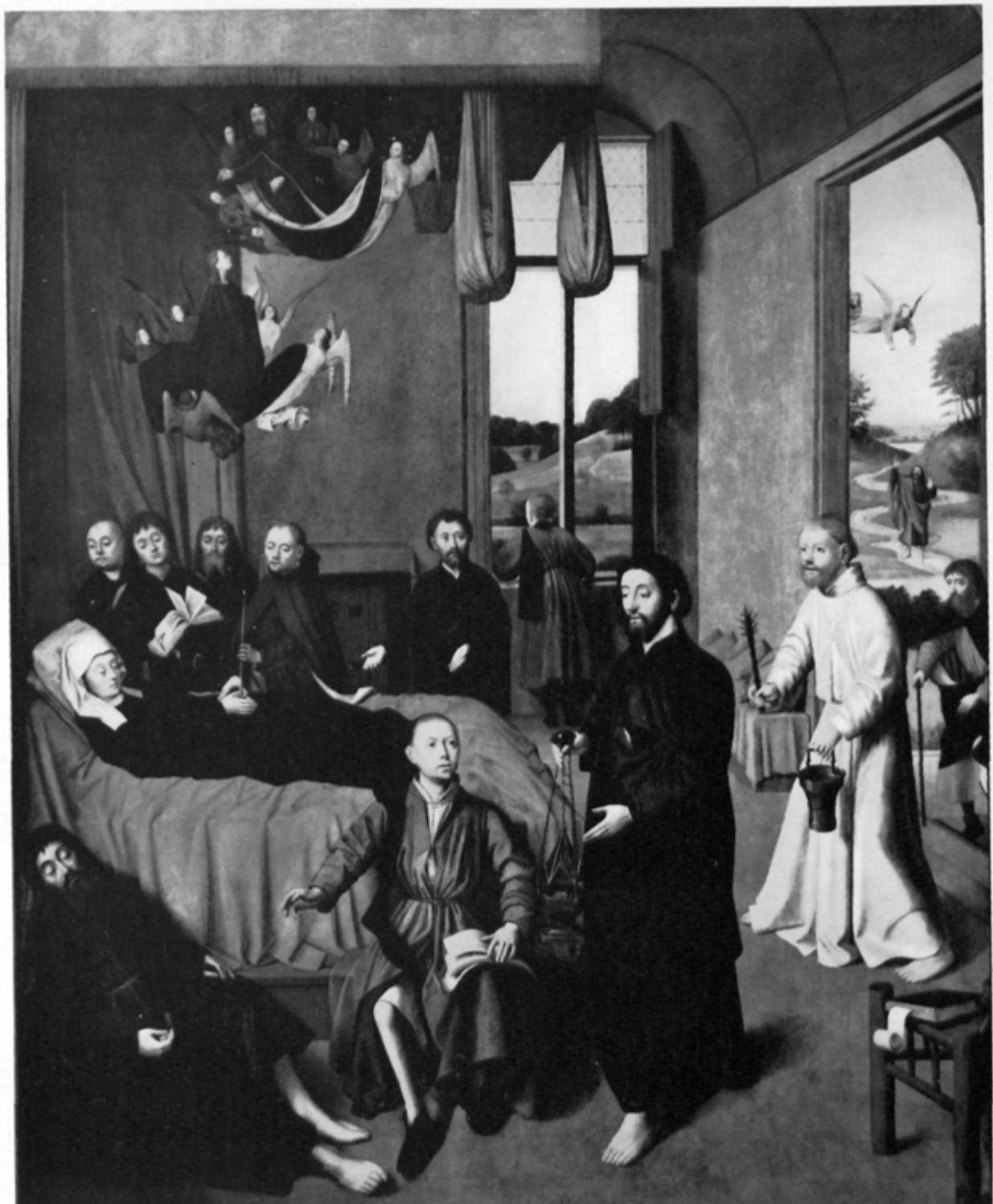
A. Petrus Christus (?). Portrait of Philip the Good. Belœil, Prince de Ligne collection. B. Petrus Christus. The Man of Sorrows. Birmingham, City Museum and Art Gallery



Petrus Christus. Virgin and Child. Kansas City, Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum (Nelson Fund)



Petrus Christus. A Female Donor and St. Elisabeth of Hungary. Bruges,
Stedelijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten (Groeninge Museum)



Petrus Christus. The Death of the Virgin. San Diego, The Putnam Foundation

Of this edition 2.500 copies have been printed, including
12 numbered copies for Max J. Friedländer's heirs

Text set in Bembo type and printed by A.W. Sijthoff,
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This new edition of Friedländer's monumental work 'Die Alt-niederländische Malerei' is based on the following principles: Friedländer's text stands unchanged in English translation. The catalogues are brought up-to-date, especially in respect of the location of the paintings. The total of 1260 illustrations in the original edition has been brought up to more than 3600. Concise editorial comments on recent research and notes on the individual works are placed at the end of each volume. An index completes each volume, and in addition a general index covering the whole of the 14 volumes will be incorporated in Volume XIV.

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